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Exploring organisational resilience in context of the lean and agile
brand communications agency: a lesson from Cape Town commercial
production companies

DECLARATION

I Karen Taylor-Vermaak hereby declare that the Research Report submitted for the BA Honours in Strategic Brand Communication degree to The Independent Institute for Education is my own work and has not been previously submitted to another University or Higher Education Institution for degree purposes.

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Date

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This research paper is dedicated to all those film industry producers and production crew who seldom get the recognition they deserve for being the pillars of foundational support on which the award-winning visions of creative directors the world over are realized and brought to life.

I thank my children Suzi, Christian and Lucy Vermaak whose endless patience, hugs, high-fives, words of encouragement, cups of tea and unwavering support this year have humbled me and kept me going; my husband Chris Vermaak for granting me the space and time to study full time, reinvent my career, and for never judging and always listening; and my friends and family near and far who have empathized, sympathized, consoled, encouraged, tolerated, soothed, placated, motivated and supported me through this grueling year.

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Karen Taylor-Vermaak
24 October 2016

Abstract

This research constitutes an explorative study of organisational and operational characteristics shared by established commercial production companies in Cape Town, and which can be attributed to their organisational resilience and on-going success.

It stems from the need for a new approach to advertising that delivers engaging branding messages to an ever demanding and discerning consumer also points to the need for a new agency model.

This paper analyses and identifies organisational characteristics shared by Cape Town commercial production companies to which their organisational resilience can be attributed. It is the first of its kind to collect data with which to identify and name the methodologies and conceptual thinking within these organisations, using qualitative and quantitative data collected from executive producers and production company owners as well as the permanent and freelance crew that work with them.

The study identifies the management structures, methodologies and conceptual frameworks within these production companies, and relates them to existing documented phenomena that are known to contribute towards organisational resilience, namely agile, lean and Shamrock. It also seeks to question if and how these identified characteristics and business behaviours could be adapted and repurposed in the context of a new model of lean and agile brand communications agency.

The findings in this paper serve as a starting point for further research into the development of an improved model of lean and agile branding agency.

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Chapter 1.

Introduction

1.1 Background

If advertising needs to change and be more human-centric (Kay 2015), then it stands to reason that advertising agency models must too, or at the very least be able to facilitate that change. (Kay 2015) posits that a new advertising model is necessary to respond to the needs of modern brands. This model will need to move from the current one that favours introspection and disruption, to a more people oriented and empathetic (Kay 2015).

Increasingly advertising agencies are expected to deliver more for less, and not only academics but also corporate CEOs are asking for a new model on how to deliver effective marketing (Richards 2015) to replace the conventional model thought by some experts as becoming defunct (Winsor, 2013). Agencies are also being held to account more on what they deliver for what they are paid, and questioned about their industry models and failure to keep pace with changes in the marketplace (O'Reilly 2014).

According to the authority on advertising and media website Marklives.com, it's estimated that in South Africa, thirteen of the 36 top ranked revenue-creating agencies are owned by the same agency group (WPP) and only nine are independent. By their very nature, large agencies carry heavy overheads, which are recouped in their profit margin. This often leads to strained client/agency relationships and has attracted on-going criticism from the media (Treanor 2012).

Faced with the same economic and political challenges as advertising agencies, Cape Town commercial production companies, which facilitate the production of commercials for

the international market, arguably have a more optimistic future, having generating a turnover of R0.87bn in 2006 (Wesgro). Acting as a central project management office, these facilitating firms offer a superior client service experience that is held to rigorous standards by a network of dedicated executive producers and specialist creative, technical and production crew. Revenue earned is through fixed-fee or cost-plus project delivery contracts that specialise in digital video and stills content production.

1.2 Problem statement

The rationale for this investigation is motivated by the ongoing discourse questioning the relevance and future of traditional advertising agencies and the current advertising model as suggested by J.Winsor (2013). The research is further motivated by the author's personal experience as a freelance film industry professional and agency producer.

Having received experiential training in short form (TV commercials) production management in a highly efficient, service-oriented production office, the author was struck by the inefficiencies and shortcomings in the agency office, by comparison, particularly in terms of the attitude toward the client and the agency's view of what constitutes 'good service'. During the same year and while studying for a certification as a Project Management Professional (PMP®) with the Project Management Institute in 2015, the author investigated different project management methodologies, and identified that the service production companies in Cape Town facilitating the production of international television commercials, use a hybrid of the Agile project management methodology to deliver projects, which relies on effective communication and optimises efficiency and quick delivery. It appeared to the author that the existing products and services offered by advertising agencies could be improved by modelling the business practices of commercial production companies in Cape Town.

Experts suggest that it is also necessary to investigate team structure and compensation of existing agency models as an obstacle to performance (p52 BCIC), which the author believes requires rethinking the human resources structure and project management methodology of agencies.

This paper will be of interest to academics and practitioners as it analyses and identifies organisational characteristics shared by Cape Town commercial production companies to which their organisational resilience can be attributed. It is the first of its kind to collect data with which to identify and name the methodologies and conceptual thinking within these organisations, using qualitative and quantitative data collected from executive producers and production company owners as well as the permanent and freelance crew that work with them.

1.3 Research objectives

Identifying the structures, methodologies and conceptual frameworks within these production companies, and assigning them to credible business model elements known to contribute towards organisational resilience in other industry sectors can identify a business model framework common to these commercial companies.

This research project has three objectives.

- a) The first objective of this research is to explore and understand how organisational resilience of established Cape Town commercial production companies is facilitated through *inter alia* their management and operational processes and procedures and to analyse and identify these characteristics.
- b) The second objective is also to identify the management structures, methodologies and conceptual frameworks within these production companies, and assigning or relate them to existing documented phenomena that are known to contribute towards organisational resilience, namely agile, lean and Shamrock.
- c) The third and final objective is to contemplate the heuristic value of this research as a solution to believed shortcomings of brand communication agencies, and to gauge whether these findings could be used as a foundation to develop and test a new and more resilient model of brand communication agency (advertising agency).

1.4 Conceptualisation of key concepts

The most pertinent concepts related to this study are as follows.

1.4.1 Traditional Advertising Agency Model

Advertising - according to Koekemoer 2015, advertising can be defined as a mass-mediated attempt to persuade (Semenik et al 2012:11) and has four purposes which are to attract attention, inform, persuade and to remind (Koekemoer 2015) consumers to spend money on a product or service. Traditional advertising in a pre-digital age was in the form of print media, television, cinema, billboards and radio. A traditional advertising model for the purposes of this research has a client services department, a creative department, a production department, a strategy department and a financial department. Advertising agencies for the purposes of this paper include all brand communication agencies.

1.4.3. Commercial Production Companies

Production companies offer expertise to produce TV, radio, print and internet advertisements and marketing or promotional materials (Koekemoer 2015 p 78). A facilitating production company is one that creates revenue by facilitating the production of a video or stills commercial for television or cinema, and charging a production fee for these services. In addition production companies charge a mark-up on the production costs as a source of revenue. The owner of the production company is also most often the executive producer.

1.4.4 Shamrock Organisational Model

The Shamrock organisational model was originated by Charles Handy in his book *The Age of Unreason* (1990), wherein he delves into the impact of a fast changing world and refers to the dawning of an Age of Unreason). He focuses on the effect of this on organisations and in particular how future work and working relationships will be structured in response to what he terms 'discontinuous' change. Discontinuous change is where the only true prediction is that nothing is predictable anymore (Handy 1990). In this visionary book Handy predicts the emergence of the Shamrock organisation that is made up of a full-time employed professional core supported from the outside by self-employed professionals and a contingent workforce.

1.4.5 Lean Thinking

Lean is an organisational management philosophy that originated from the Toyota Production System (TPS) and was documented in Toyota's own promotional material *The Toyota Way* (2001). In his seminal work on TPS, Liker (2004) recommends the lean approach as a philosophy of continuous business improvement through more effective business processes, service quality and cost saving (Liker, 2004). Lean focuses on a systematic method of minimising different types of waste, and is well suited to advertising agencies and production houses (Leung, 2016).

1.4.6 Agile

Agile is a project management methodology with roots in the seminal Manifesto for Agile Software Development (2001). This work which is referred to as the Agile Manifesto was authored by seventeen key software developers in 2001, with the aim of 'uncovering better ways of developing software by doing it and helping others do it'. The Manifesto commits to twelve key principles for software development that can be applied to most businesses. In essence these principles value relationships over processes, working products over paperwork,

customer collaboration over contract negotiation, and responding to change instead of rigidly following a plan (Agile Manifesto, 2001).

1.4.7 Organisational Resilience

According to Burnard, K & Bhamra (2011), organisations must strive and continually adapt to be competitive and remain viable with uncertain environments. The working definition for organisational resilience is a property that 'relates to the inherent and adaptive qualities that enable an organisation to take a proactive approach to threat and risk mitigation' (Burnard, K & Bhamra (2011). Gartner's five pillars of organisational resilience are illustrated in Garner's New Synergy Model, which is believed to be the framework for creating this organization of the future. The five pillars of this resilient organization are articulated as lying in its leadership, culture, people, systems and settings. It is through application of these five principles that it is possible to coherently bring together the abovementioned business philosophies and methodologies of shamrock, agile and lean and apply them to a creative marketing business and ensure its resilience in an uncertain environment

1.5 Research Overview

1.5.1 Research paradigm

This research study falls within the Radical Humanist paradigm, as the stance of the researcher is to explore and understand the inner workings and characteristics of commercial production companies.

1.5.2 Research approach, design and methodological implications

The author's approach to this study is pragmatic but leans towards a determinist stance. The research approach can be identified as nomothetic in that the author relied heavily on surveys and interviews for primary qualitative research to identify trends and nuances of general practices characteristic of commercial production companies.

It was anticipated that primary research would illustrate that the overarching factors contributing towards the organisational resilience of the commercial production companies are an underlying organisational culture that is lean, agile and service-oriented, with a focus on

These aforementioned concepts and phenomena are recognised contributing factors of organisational resilience.

The researcher's social standing within the film industry sector as an erstwhile line producer and currently the wife of a technical crew member resulted in the ability to collect data from sources that may otherwise not have accessible.

Credibility was lent to this study as a result of longstanding relationships based on trust and friendship with various experienced production and technical crew and executive producers.

A mixed methods research procedure combining quantitative and qualitative methods was preferred for this study as these methods tend to complement each other and 'allow for a more complete analysis of the research situation (Greene, Caracelli & Graham, 1989; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). This enables stories and anecdotes, observations and numbers create a clear picture of the area of study.

The stakeholders in commercial productions are widespread and numerous, necessitating that the nature of this study be iterative. Data had to be collected parallel from different sources at times and in ways convenient to them, which is why the author used the convergent parallel mixed methods design as a framework.

In this way both qualitative and quantitative data was collected through structured and semi-structured interviews and online surveys from a variety of industry stakeholders, over the same period of time.

The relevance of using this design for this study is recommended by Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011 as it is 'most suitable when the researcher wants to collect both types of data at the same time about a single phenomenon in order to merge the different, such as by comparing and contrasting them to produce well-validated conclusions.

This study lends itself to further research on the commercial company business framework so that it can be replicated and adapted to develop, prototype and test a more resilient model of brand communication agency that is lean, agile and service-oriented.

1.6 Outline of chapter contents

The first chapter covers the background and outline of how this study came about and why it is relevant and of interest not only to academics but also to the creative production and brand communications sector in general.

Chapter two covers the literature that was used to support the objective of the study, using seminal and current sources to provide theoretical context and relevance to this study.

Chapter three details the research design and methodology used in this study and the relevance thereof as well as the data collection methods used and a detailed description of their application, relevance, and identified strengths and weaknesses.

Chapter four sets out the techniques of data analysis used as well as the insights both expected and unexpected of the data obtained. The analysis of the qualitative data obtained from the interviews and both qualitative and quantitative data obtained from the online surveys are discussed at length and illustrated by use of graphs and tables.

Chapter five presents the conclusions drawn from the data collected in terms of the broader context of the study and the research problem as set out in 1.2. As well as the implications of the findings on future areas of research. The analysis of the data in chapter four is evaluated in context of whether it was successful in achieving the research objectives, and the heuristic value of the study is assessed.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Outline of worldview / paradigm / tradition

There is an large body of literature covering six of the seven elements of this research project namely a) the traditional agency model that may (or may not) be broken, b) the need for a new approach to advertising and the agency model, c) the lean business philosophy, d) agile project management, e) the Shamrock business model and f) organizational resilience. There is no academic literature on the business models of Cape Town production companies that specialise in facilitating the production of commercials.

In his damning 2013 Harvard Business Review article entitled *The End of Traditional Ad Agencies*, John Windsor warns advertising agencies of the day to rethink their business models or risk redundancy. If reinvented, ad agencies will be better able to harness the talent that is abundantly available to them in the global network of creative. Windsor (2012) suggests doing so 'by creating an operating system'. His use of the term system is relevant as Bell & Joroff (2011) also refer to the agile workplace as a *system*, made up of interacting elements.

The need for a new approach to advertising that delivers engaging branding messages to an ever-demanding and discerning consumer also points to the need for a new agency model (Kay, 2015, p43). This argument is not fully supported by agencies that believe that the model as such is not broken - it just needs to be tweaked (Coffee 2016).

In analysing Gartner's Five Principles of Organizational Resilience, research analyst at Gartner Michael A. Bell states that society has "entered an era of global economic and geopolitical uncertainty" and he discusses the key requirements for an organization to "respond rapidly to unforeseen change, even chaotic disruption".

Using the events of 9/11 as a starting point, he elaborates on why businesses being housed in physical buildings as has always been the case, is not only no longer a necessity, but can hamper a company's ability to recover after a significant setback. Bell refers to resilience as the ability for a business or organization to '(be) able to bounce back — and, in fact, to bounce forward — with speed, grace, determination and precision.' Bell suggests that resilience ties in with the natural evolution of traditional 'place-centric' business offices towards a more virtualized system where a workforce is prioritized over an office building, by allowing staff to work anywhere, any time, using modern technology that is available to facilitate this remote working.

Bell refers to a resilient virtual organization, or RVO, and suggests that this is 'becoming a preferred strategy for many leading global businesses' where project team members and human resources can work together from different countries, cultures and time zones. What is particularly relevant of this article is Bell's suggestion that enterprises are evolving from being highly responsive and agile, to being agile, responsive and *resilient*. This evolution towards resilience will require a certain organizational systemic architecture to be in place, which will enable an enterprise to 'weather' economic upheavals such as the world economic recession of 2008, natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina and in a more local context, the firing of a well-performing Minister of Finance. To this end Bell identifies five fundamental components he refers to as a variation on Garner's New

Synergy Model, which he believes is the framework for creating this organization of the future, but adding to the elements of Gartner's New Synergy model, which is already 'synchronized and knowledge-based'.

The five pillars of this resilient organization are articulated as lying in its leadership, culture, people, systems and settings. It is through application of these five principles that it is possible to coherently bring together the abovementioned business philosophies and methodologies of shamrock, agile and lean and apply them to a creative marketing business and ensure it's resilience in an uncertain environment.

Similar to the executive commitment to brand building that is inherent in brand leadership, organizational resilience relies on key leadership decisions committing to resilience as a priority and ensuring that resources are allocated accordingly. The leadership of a resilient organization constantly weighs up and balances risk taking and risk containment to ensure 'ongoing innovation' in a context of 'prudent risk minimisation'. Bell acknowledges that these objectives appear to be in conflict and refers to the Research Notes. "Risk Management for the Resilient Organization" ([TG-14-9542](#)) wherein there is a plan for mitigating risks in an enterprise. He also refers to Gartner's paper "Risk-Taking Is Good for Resilient Enterprises" ([SPA-14-8080](#)) as it sets out how to balance risk taking and risk aversion. The ongoing involvement and reinforcement of the business leadership's commitment to resilience needs to be evident in how investments in the business are made such as security systems, authentication procedures, controls and technology enhancements. Bell emphasizes these as working together to create 'an infrastructure for a highly mobile and distributed work style.

Gartner's second pillar of organizational resilience is business culture, which rests on organizational empowerment, trust, accountability and purpose. This requires an organization to evolve (systemically) into networks of employees that self-organise into communities of practice for learning and mentoring, and who are empowered to participate, lead and organize virtual teams. There must be a sense of trust between employees, management, suppliers and partners. This strong sense of purpose that is shared at all levels in the organization cements RVO together and arranges individual, workgroup and enterprise goals on a continuum, that exhibits staff who assume responsibility without question, and regardless of Finally, the RVO inculcates a strong culture of accountability up and down the organization. People assume responsibility without question. People commit to action and do what has to be done — regardless of rank, title or job description.

The third pillar of this structure is the people that make up the workforce. This ties in very closely with culture, as the nature of the people that work in the organization will determine how well they adopt and promote the culture. The election, motivation and leading of this workforce will determine how well individuals and the group overcome obstacles and illustrate resilience during times of hardship. Bell refers to the stories of individual heroism, self-sacrifice and initiative Sept. 11 but states that for this to happen requires people to be selected very carefully. The Gartner article

"Enhancing Business Resilience Through People Selection" ([TG-14-9122](#)) suggests how to select and groom employees to operate effectively in an uncertain, highly unstructured environment. Bell goes on to suggest that there needs to be a system of people support and services that goes beyond the boundaries of the business – he suggests a virtual human resources group that is able to support employees irrespective of time and space. Gartner's article "Virtual HR: Strategies of the Resilient Enterprise" ([SPA-14-8078](#)) suggests on how to do this.

The fourth supporting element of the resilient organization is the systems that make up the infrastructure and connectivity. The premise of the framework in the "Workplace Agility Equals Workplace Resilience: Here's How" ([COM-14-7998](#)) is that successful global organisations are agile and flexible as a result of the combination of 'a highly distributed

workplace model' and 'a highly robust and collaborative IT infrastructure'.

Bell believes the last key to resilience is the actual workplace setting, which should be distributed into multiple settings. Although not intentionally as a method to prevent events such as the terror attack of 9/11, it is noted however that the actual workplace of commercial productions does alternate where only the production company office remains constant and the other areas where the work takes place, is determined by the deliverables required by client i.e. locations where the commercials need to be filmed to deliver on the creative concept and vision of the advertising campaign.

In his seminal work on the Toyota Production System, Liker (2004) recommends the lean approach as a philosophy of continuous business improvement through more effective business processes, service quality and cost saving (Liker, 2004). Lean focuses on a systematic method of minimising different types of waste, and is well suited to advertising agencies and production houses (Leung, 2016).

The Agile manifesto (2001) sets out key principles of project organisation that value relationships over processes, working products over paperwork, customer collaboration over contract negotiation and responding to change instead of rigidly following a plan.

Handy's model of a shamrock organisation is one that consists of three main human resource elements –the core essential executives and workers that are supported by outside contractors and part-time help (Handy 2002). Accordingly, this organisational structure allows for the outsourcing of specialised and general services as required.

Organisations need to strive and continually adapt to be competitive and remain relevant in uncertain environments (Burnard, K, & Bhamra (2011). This resilience of an organisation 'relates to the inherent and adaptive qualities that enable an organisation to take a proactive approach to threat and risk mitigation'.

The argument for an agile workplace as one of best practice (Bell & Joroff 2011) relates directly to organisational resilience and organisational systems as described by Burnard & Bhamra (2011).

2.2 Theoretical foundation and how it links to the research problem

In his seminal work on TPS, Liker (2004) recommends the lean approach as a philosophy of continuous business improvement through more effective business processes, service quality and cost saving (Liker, 2004). Lean focuses on a systematic method of minimising different types of waste, and is well suited to advertising agencies and production houses (Leung, 2016).

Handy's model of shamrock Organisation - A Shamrock organisation consists of three main human resource elements and is defined as a 'core of essential executives and workers supported by outside contractors and part-time help (Handy (2002)'.
Accordingly, this organisational structure allows for the outsourcing of services as required, which results in reduced overheads.

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The Agile manifesto (2001) sets out key principles of project organisation which value relationships over processes, working products over paperwork, customer collaboration over contract negotiation and responding to change instead of rigidly following a plan.

According to Burnard, K & Bhamra (2011), organisations must strive and continually adapt to be competitive and remain viable with uncertain environments (Burnard, K & Bhamra 2011). This resilience of an organisation 'relates to the inherent and adaptive qualities that enable an organisation to take a proactive approach to threat and risk mitigation'. The argument for an agile workplace as one of best practice (Bell & Joroff 2011) relates directly to organisational resilience and organisational systems as described by Burnard & Bhamra (2011).

2.3 Details of the issue/problem being investigated

According to authority on advertising and media website Marklives.com, it's estimated that in South Africa, thirteen of the 36 top ranked revenue-creating agencies are owned by the same agency group (WPP) and only nine are independent (By their very nature, large agencies carry heavy overheads which are recouped in their profit margin. This often leads to strained client/agency relationships and attracts criticism from the media (Treanor 2012). Faced with the same economic and political challenges as advertising agencies, Cape Town service film and commercial production companies, which facilitate the production of films and commercials for the international market, arguably have a more optimistic future, generating a turnover of R0.87bn in 2006 (Wesgro). Acting as a *de facto* central project management office, these facilitating firms offer a superior client service experience that is held to rigorous standards by a network of dedicated executive producers and specialist creative, technical and production crew. Revenue earned is through fixed-fee or cost-plus project delivery contracts that specialise in digital video and stills content production.

2.4 Links between the current problem and current literature

With the suggestion that there is a need for a new model of advertising that responds to modern brand thinking (Kay, G, The Post Disruptive advertising era) and the correlating need for advertising agency models to adapt to a changing marketing environment (p49 BCIC) the opportunity exists to explore the successful business models of Cape Town facilitating service production companies to extract learnings that can be applied to develop a lean, agile and more resilient advertising agency model best suited to benefit the South African economy as a whole. To date no investigation of this sort has been done.

Chapter 3

Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Detailed explanation of research problem and relevant research questions

This research is motivated by the ongoing news media coverage questioning the future and relevance of traditional advertising agencies and the current advertising model as suggested by J.Winsor (2013). In particular with reference their resilience and ability to adapt to changing consumer and brand behaviour environments.

By comparison, and faced with the same economic and political challenges as advertising agencies in South Africa, Cape Town commercial production companies appear to be thriving. There is a group of owner-managed production companies, which facilitate the production of commercials for the local and international market, that appear to have a more optimistic future, having generating a turnover of R0.87bn in 2006 (Wesgro).

Prior to this study, no research has been done on Cape Town commercial production companies that provide information on their organisational or operational characteristics. This is the first study of its kind that seeks to identify these shared characteristics and identify them as recognisable and credible business, staffing or organisational models also found outside of the film industry sector.

Thus it was necessary to carry out primary research in the form of interviews and surveys to adequately analyse their business models and identify commonalities. Primary qualitative research was used to reveal what characteristics relating to business operations and governance in the commercials production sector contribute towards some of these production companies' organisational resilience.

3.1. Research objectives

The aim is to have sufficient understanding of the processes and procedures practiced by Cape Town commercial production companies to then hypothesise about how these identified factors could inform a more resilient model of advertising (brand communications) agency?

Thus this research project has three objectives.

- a) The first objective of this research is to explore and understand how organisational resilience of established Cape Town commercial production companies is facilitated through *inter alia* their management and operational processes and procedures, through analysis and identification of these characteristics.
- b) The second objective is also to explore and understand the management structures, methodologies and conceptual frameworks at work within these production companies, and assigning or relate them to existing documented phenomena referred to in the literature review.

- c) The third and final objective is to consider the heuristic value of this research as a solution to believed shortcomings of brand communication agencies, and to gauge whether these findings could be used as a foundation to develop and test a new and more resilient model of brand communication agency (advertising agency).

3.2 Research design used to investigate the research problem

The author's approach to this study is pragmatic but leans towards a determinist stance. The 'broken' model of traditional advertising agencies requires practical or at least practicable solutions which the author argues are currently being used by commercial production companies in Cape Town in the form of lean thinking, agile project, and Shamrock business model of staffing, amongst others. The research approach is nomothetic in that the author used surveys and interviews for primary qualitative research to identify common themes of general practices common to Cape Town commercial production companies.

The mode of inquiry that informs the research design is a mixed (or multi) method mode of inquiry using qualitative and quantitative data that will help to 'add depth and detail to findings' (Swanson & Holton, 1997:3) using a QUAL + quan concurrent data collection typology. The reason for this is that emphasis is on qualitative rather than quantitative data collection and analysis. The quantitative data collected to support the qualitative findings and researchers assumptions.

As a research premise, the delineated paradigmatic assumptions and perspectives of the researcher's ontological dimensions take a nominalist stance because the respondents' internal and subjective experiences are important to the research. The researcher's epistemological dimensions or perspective to the mode of enquiry are interpretive (postmodern).

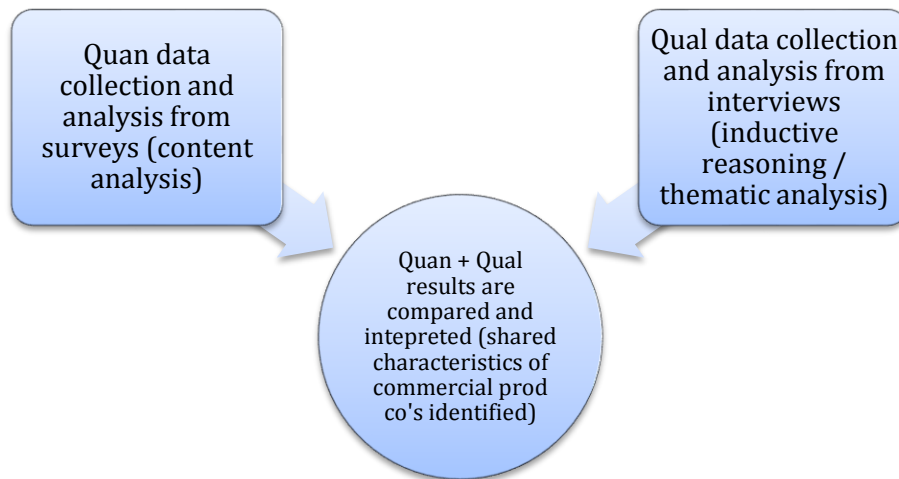
The nature of the relationship between the researcher and the area of study is one where the researcher is empathetically and (inter) subjectively immersed in the research as a result of her practical work experience in commercial production and established long-term relationships with some key players in the industry.

A mixed methods research procedure combining quantitative and qualitative methods was preferred for this study as these methods tend to complement each other and 'allow for a more complete analysis of the research situation (Greene, Caracelli & Graham, 1989; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009)

The author used the convergent parallel mixed methods design, thus qualitative and quantitative data was collected through structured and semi-structured interviews and online surveys from a variety of industry stakeholders. The relevance of using this design for this study is recommended by Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011 as it is 'most suitable when the researcher wants to collect both types of data at the same time about a single phenomenon in order to merge the different, such as by comparing and contrasting them to produce well-validated conclusions. This approach proved most fruitful as a 360-degree view was obtained of how commercial companies operate in advertising agencies. This

was done by collecting a wide range of data from different stakeholders in the commercials production industry that have knowledge and experience of working closely with advertising agencies.

Figure 2 Convergent parallel mixed method designs



The proposal for this study suggested grounded theory as a methodology to quantify data of a qualitative nature in support of the research objective. However the author decided against using only this methodology as the amount of time that would be required to transcribe and code the interviews was insufficient. The initial response from executive producers invited for interviews was also too slow and it was then decided to also collect quantitative data from freelance crew and commercial producers by way of online surveys because they are faster to complete, easier to distribute and easier to analyse. Thus the surveys completed by executive producers served to complement the interviews that were had already been recorded.

3.3 Data collection methods used: Interviews, questionnaires and surveys

Collection methods used were interviews, a face-to-face survey, email questionnaires and online surveys.

3.3.1 Interviews

According to Maree (2015:93), qualitative interviews allow the researcher to observe the world through the participant's eyes so as to collect data that provides insight and a better understanding of a "participants construction of knowledge and social reality".

Interviews were chosen as a data collection tool, specifically to garner factual data but also to gather objective opinion from commercial producers that have worked very closely with advertising agencies in a business capacity for as long as they have been in business. Richly detailed qualitative data was collected thus, which is relates specifically

to the problem statement regarding the relevance of the traditional advertising agency model that's referred to in the literature review.

Three types of interviews were used namely structured interviews, semi-structured interviews and unstructured interviews.

Structured Interviews

A structured interview was conducted with only one production company owner/executive producer who is known for producing high-end award-winning international work for some of the most creative commercial directors in the world. This producer also sits on the executive committee of the Commercial Producers Association of South Africa (CPA) ¹and therefore was able to provide significant insights into the local and international landscape advertising agencies.

The producer was mailed the Participant Consent form and list of questions, and a suitable date was agreed on. The interview took place at the producer's office and was recorded and later transcribed. The author used one structured interview to obtain very detailed information regarding the inner workings and operational systems and processes employed by one commercial production company owner with whom the author has a long-standing work and social relationship. The relevance of using a structured interview in this instance was to obtain factual data regarding the organisational characteristics, which would carry significant weight to the research by creating a theoretical link between the facts and the research objective.

The interview consisted of 14 questions regarding the characteristics of the production company that she owns and manages. The interview duration was 52 minutes and transcription of the interview is attached hereto marked **Annexure A**.

Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured and unstructured interviews were conducted with two agency executives and one erstwhile agency staff member, as well as with one production company owner/executive producer.

In the case of the semi-structured interviews, the participants were contacted via email wherein they were advised of the research study and invited to be interviewed at a place and time convenient to them. The three unstructured interviews coincidentally took place at the same coffee shop, during the same week. The purpose of using this approach with agency executives was to place them at ease and not make them feel

¹ The Commercial Producers Association of South Africa (CPA) is a professional trade association of film companies specializing in the production of television commercials.

like they were being scrutinised or under attack. It was also necessary to follow this approach as the advertising agency (or branding agency) model is viewed differently by different sectors of the industry and the aim was to collect their varied views and perceptions of the research topic. The common question asked was whether they believe that the traditional model of advertising agency is still relevant today. As the agency executives hailed from different types of agencies, and also had extensive experience working in different large advertising agencies that are considered to be traditional, their opinions and insights provided were valuable to the research objective. The transcribed interviews are attached hereto marked **Annexure B and C**.

A third semi-structured interview was conducted with an erstwhile digital marketer-turned-business owner who had extensive experience in working for small digital agencies that were bought out by larger holding companies, namely WPP and Dentsu. This interview occurred spontaneously after a formal interview took place in the business owner's coffee shop with an agency producer. The serendipitous nature of the interview led to the researcher obtaining a fourth source of qualitative data that further added rich insights and observations on the perceived shortcomings of large agencies from a staff-member's position. The transcribed interview is attached hereto marked **Annexure D**.

Unstructured interviews

A fourth unstructured interview took place but in a different context. The original intention was to conduct a structured interview with another owner/executive producer the latter was too busy at the time. It was then agreed that the author would interview the producer on a convenient day, and conduct a face-to-face survey. On completion of the 14 survey questions, the conversation continued and opinions provided by the producer were recorded. The transcribed interview is attached hereto marked **Annexure E**.

These interviews served to corroborate the emerging data being collected from online surveys and questionnaires.

3.3.2 Surveys

As a data collection method, surveys were the most efficient and appropriate way to collect information on shared characteristics of commercial production companies as they provided sufficient data to 'explain the status of phenomena, trace change and draw comparisons' (McMillan and Schumacher (2001) and Crowther et al (1994).

Using Survey Monkey as a monthly paid subscription service, professional-looking surveys could be drawn up fast and distributed quickly to a large audience. The advantages of using online surveys were that it was inexpensive, fast and the author

was alerted when new responses were received online. Graphs and statistics are easily extrapolated from the data on these surveys and questions were not limited as is on the free version of the application.

Furthermore, the online link to the survey could be posted on social media or sent via email and the respondent could complete the survey when convenient. None of the disadvantages usually associated with online surveys such as Maree (2015:196) suggests, were present, as a result of the purposive sampling method used in choosing the survey respondents, as well as the method in which the survey was presented to the respondents on the Producers Forum on Facebook.

Survey Design

Surveys were used to collect data from two of the sample groups, namely the freelance industry crew that service the commercial production companies and the executive producers and owners of those commercial production companies. The sample groups are discussed in detail in paragraph 4.

Using online surveys as a method to reach the freelance group was the most logical method due to the nature of the hours and locations where commercial freelancers work. As film industry professionals work ten-hour days on commercials and twelve-hour days on long form productions (feature films), the window of opportunity to engage them for data collection is small and constantly in flux.

The survey questions were designed as mostly multiple-choice questions so as to make it simple and fast to complete the form, as the author was sensitive to the respondents that have limited time. The questions were very clearly and unambiguously framed and followed a logical sequence, and where even remotely relevant allowance was made for additional information to be provided by respondents of purposes of clarity.

– Freelancers Production Crew Survey

The survey for the freelancers consisted of eight multiple-choice questions, one grid question and one open-ended question. The questions were submitted to the author's research supervisor for perusal prior to distribution, to prevent any cognitive bias. Forty-three surveys were completed.

The title of the survey is: **Shared characteristics of Cape Town commercial production companies**

– Executive Producers Survey

The survey for the executive producers consisted of 14 questions that were focused more on the internal operations and management structure of the companies, as well

as their marketing, procurement and business-to-business relationships. Six executive producers completed the survey.

The title of the survey is: Cape Town commercial production companies characteristics

3.4 Population and sampling groups and sizes

The unit of analysis for the qualitative research study to which the data collection pertains are the comments naming the (organisational) characteristics of commercial production companies that have been observed by freelance crew past and present, and which are captured on the surveys the crew completed and in the interviews.

Due to the exploratory nature of this study, it was not only advantageous but also necessary to use the non-probability sampling method of purposive sampling as only a small segment of the entire population of the geographical area of Cape Town could be relevant to the study and able to provide relevant information on these production companies that would be useful to the study.

Therefore the specific target sample group included only those individuals who had experience working in commercial production with Cape Town production companies, either on the production company or the agency side. For this reason qualifying factors were taken into consideration in terms of the design of the questions and surveys, as well as the method used to identify qualifying population of the sample

A number of executive producers first started out as freelance crew working for other production companies and for this reason the freelance crew survey made allowance for producers that now own their own companies to also complete the freelance crew questionnaire as they still have relevant information regarding those characteristics.

However, care was taken to ensure that being completed by the 6 producers that completed online surveys for executive producers duplicated none of the freelance sample crew surveys that were put online. In this way the integrity of the data collected as part of each sample is secured.

3.4.1 Sample groups and sizes

For the data collected to be complete and deep enough, the author decided on a segmented approach to the cohort i.e. it was divided into two paradigms, one that related specifically to Cape Town commercial production companies and one that related to advertising (or branding) agencies.

Purposive sampling was used as suggested by Maree (2002). This method of sampling was chosen because the area of study could only benefit from data collected within a certain category of individuals that complied with a specific set of criteria.

The population of individuals have for the purpose of this study and for triangulation and verification reasons were divided into four sample groups namely:

- a) 10 production company owners/executive producers
- b) 43 production and support crew (mostly freelancers)
- c) 4 advertising agency executives and
- d) 1 retired agency staff member

The first group consists of freelance production crew from various departments that work on commercials. The criteria for this group was that they had to have had direct contact with any number of Cape Town commercials production companies to the extent that they have engaged in a work capacity with these companies. They also had to have knowledge about these production companies and been able to observe the organisational operations of these companies.

The second group consisted of executive producers from commercial production companies localised to the geographical area of Cape Town.

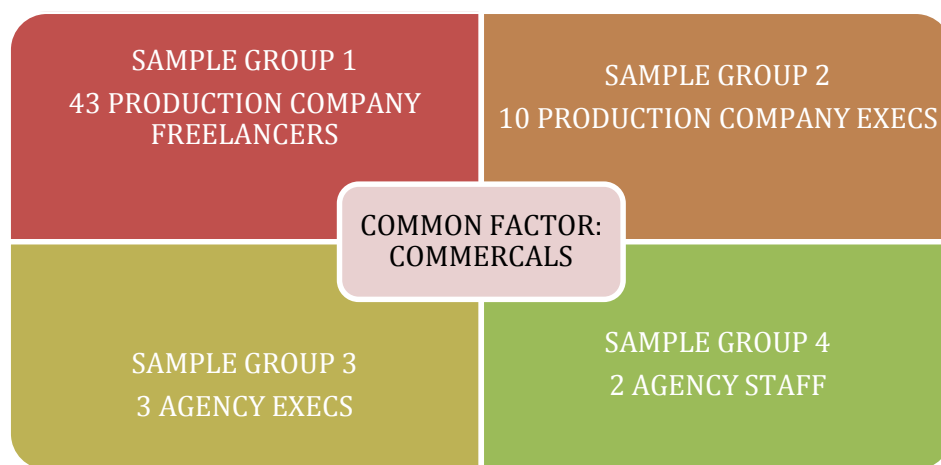
The third group comprising agency executives was chosen to provide opinion on their experience of the current brand agency model and corroborate opinions and information received from executive producers.

The fourth group was able to provide insights from experiential view of working in an agency, from the inside.

The rationale for this mix is that first two groups are able to offer data that has direct impact on the achievability of the research objective. The second two groups are able to also add heuristic value to the study by offering guidance on a broader context of the objective and future actions and or research. The relatively small sample sizes are warranted due to the homogenous nature of the sample groups (Maree, 2015: 199). Furthermore each group serves a common purpose by contributing towards research objective as they all form part of a larger population that produces commercials in Cape Town.

The larger sample group of industry freelancers in relation to the executive producers is also supported by the fact that freelance crew will work with a number of executive producers from different production companies, several times in a 12 month cycle. They are therefore able to observe operational procedures and company culture in a variety of different companies. However, executive producers only work in their own companies, and can only give information on their own operations. The researcher required high levels of accuracy of the freelancer crew's observations and it was necessary to get a bigger sample than of any other group.

Figure 1. Graphical illustration of research sample groups



Sample group 1 - Production company freelancers

The first group consists of freelance production crew from various departments that work on commercials. The criteria for this group was that they had to have had direct contact with any number of Cape Town commercials production companies to the extent that they have engaged in a work capacity with these companies. They also had to have knowledge about these production companies and been able to observe the organisational operations of these companies.

This group is homogenous in that each member has worked as crew on a commercial produced by a Cape Town commercial production company.

This group's purpose was specifically to collect quantitative and qualitative data on the shared characteristics of Cape Town commercial production companies.

This data was collected using an online survey sent via email to specific freelance crew known by the researcher to meet the above-mentioned criteria and also shared as an online link on Producers Forum Facebook Group. This group was specifically formed as a portal for film industry production freelancers. The credibility of this group in terms of meeting the necessary criteria is secured, as they are members of a closed Facebook Group that is monitored very closely by the group administrator who is a well-known freelancer in the commercial productions. This Facebook group only allows credible and known industry freelancers to join and the message was specifically worded in such way as to invite only industry freelancers that have experience working on commercials in Cape Town, to

Attributed to the high-stress environment wherein film industry freelancers operate, 43 surveys were completed by industry freelancers after posting the survey three times on Facebook, and emailing respondents directly with an email link or sending them a direct message on Facebook. However, the comprehensive nature and quality of the data collected is sufficient for the purposes of this study, in that the findings are rich and insightful and present a clear picture of the specific environment for the researcher from which to draw conclusions and make observations. Findings and analysis of the data reveal that this specific group have experience working with a number of different companies

Sample group 2 - Production company executives

The second group consisted of executive producers from commercial production companies localised to the geographical area of Cape Town. The requirement for this group was that the production company executives had to either own or hold a senior management position in a Cape Town production company that produces commercials, and this company has to have been in operation for a minimum of ten years.

This group was an essential part of the sample as they were able to provide very insights into the organisational characteristics of their production companies. They were also able to provide insights regarding their experience of working with advertising as their clients. Thus they were able to provide rich information on this area of research. This group in the sample is homogenous in that all these businesses offer the same services in the same sector and have extensive experience working with advertising agencies.

Due to the nature of the population and sampling method used as well as the research methods for this sample, the group of 10 producers was considered by the researcher to be sufficient as they were all in operation for longer than ten years.

The aim was to conduct in-depth structured interviews with these producers, then code and analyse the themes and use the information as a basis for a grounded theory approach. However, as a result of the unpredictable and frenetic nature of the commercial production industry and the limited free time available to executive producers, the researcher was able to interview only two. Thus email questionnaires and survey data was collected from the balance.

Group 3 - Agency executives past and present

The third group consisted of three advertising (branding) agency executives that either currently works in an agency of sorts or who have held senior positions in such agencies in recent years. This group was relevant as they were able to provide insights about the current state of advertising agencies and the questionable relevance of the traditional model.

The sample of advertising industry executives included one current and prominent head creative director of a locally based international branding agency, one managing director from a small local through-the-line agency and one erstwhile creative director turned client head creative.

Group 4 – past agency staff

The fourth group consists of one erstwhile agency staff member experience of working in two digital marketing agencies that were bought by large global agency groups WPP and Dentsu. The group is small and qualitative data from an informal but in depth interview serves only to corroborate the qualitative data already obtained from sample Groups 2 and 3.

3.5 Data collection procedures

Data collection was iterative and ongoing over a period of weeks.

The following procedures were followed during data collection:

1. A sample group of 10 executive producers was identified with a view of collecting qualitative data for purposes of inductive analysis of the data
2. Interview questions were drafted and emailed to producers together with consent forms
3. Two producers responded favourably resulting in one interview and one email response to interview questions.
4. One of the email responses was incomplete in that the producer declined to answer two of the most pertinent of the questions commenting that they were 'too complex' to answer.
5. After failed attempts to secure more interviews, To identify possible targets for data collection, the author started with oldest and most used film industry resource directory called *The Whole Lot Directory 2016 22nd Ed* was used to identify a list of production companies and freelance crew.
6. Second sample group of freelance industry crew was selected, a survey was drafted and posted on the Facebook group Producers Forum
7. The social media platform Facebook was also used to recruit more freelance crew and producers via direct messages sent to some of the group members. The research is a member of the closed group for producers, line producers and production managers namely the Producers Forum, which she used to invite participants to complete the survey. The group consists of approximately 453 members of freelance and full-time production crew and producers and is a popular platform for requesting information or help regarding anything pertaining to production.
8. A further third sample group of advertising agency executives was then identified after revisiting the literature review and two semi-structured interviews were conducted and recorded at a coffee shop with two agency executives on two separate occasions.
9. A further sample group was identified as a result of a spontaneous interview at above-mentioned coffee shop, with the owner who had extensive experience working in a digital agency and was able to provide valuable information on her experience of working in an agency and the organizational characteristics hereof.
10. Industry freelancers completed surveys after posting the survey three times on Facebook, and emailing respondents directly with an email link or sending them a direct message on Facebook.
11. The researcher transcribed each interview and the text was analysed and key words coded and divided into themes that identified shared characteristics.

12. To ensure unbiased data collection, the transcribed text was given to the interviewees.

As the researcher personally knows some of the producers and is knowledgeable and experienced about the industry wherein the research question lies, extra effort was necessary to avoid researcher bias. To achieve this, four advertising agency industry executives were interviewed as well. This is to ensure that data is collected from a homogenous grouping and is not one-sided.

Chapter 4.

Data analysis and Findings

It was anticipated upfront that primary research would prove that the overarching factors contributing towards the organisational resilience of the commercial production companies are an underlying organisational culture that is lean, agile and service-oriented.

To prevent cognitive bias the survey and interview questions had to be very carefully crafted to obtain the most general and neutral observations possible with the aim of being able to identify from those answers any and all characteristics that correlate with the characteristics identified as being recognisable as lean, agile or service-oriented.

4.1 Data analysis techniques used details pertaining to the analysed data

A mixed methods approach was used to collect data of a qualitative and quantitative nature, which required the researcher to use data analysis techniques such as content analysis for surveys and thematic analysis for interviews.

The data collected from surveys completed by film industry freelancers as well as those from executive producers was collated online using the Survey Monkey data capturing and analysis program. The summaries provided from collating the responses to the ten questions by 43 respondents, identified specific and noticeable trends and commonalities, and facilitated the making of logical inferences as a result thereof.

The method of content analysis was then used to interpret the findings and derive insights from the graphs and statistics provided by these surveys. The reason for using content analysis, as an analysis tool was to identify the specific comment trends with regard to characteristics of film production companies, so that they could be attributed to concepts from the literature review and therefore remove subjectivity from the comments provided.

The interviews from all the groups were recorded and transcribed and reviewed repeatedly by the researcher as audio and as text files. Content analysis was used to identify trends and common themes.

Patterns and themes were identified and grouped and inferences were made based on the context, frequency, relevance and emphasis placed on these themes by the interviewee. The common themes were then related directly to the concepts of the literature review for interpretation and draw conclusions

A summary of data collected from the population samples is as follows:

- a) 43 online surveys completed by crew from various departments of which one respondent was a freelance agency producer (anonymous)
- b) 6 online surveys completed by owners/executive producers (anonymous)
- c) 1 in-depth recorded structured interview with executive producer/production company owner Clare van Zyl from Monkey Films (transcribed)
- d) 1 spontaneous recorded interview with Bev Wynn owner and executive producer of Gatehouse Commercials (transcribed)
- e) 1 email interview completed by Janette de Villiers executive producer and owner of Groundglass and Inc
- f) 2 semi-structured interview with agency executives Leon Jacobs from Havas Boondoggle (transcribed) and Warren Lodge from Lifebrand. (Not yet transcribed)
- g) 1 unstructured recorded interview with Richard Stone, erstwhile creative at Yellowwood (not yet transcribed)
- h) 1 unstructured recorded interview with Stacy Kleinhans, co-owner of Baseline coffee and erstwhile digital marketer (not yet transcribed)

4.2 Findings of Analysis of data from Group 1

Shared characteristics of Cape Town commercial production companies

Shared characteristics of Cape Town commercial production companies		
Question 1. How long have you been working on commercial productions in Cape Town?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than five years	14.0%	6
Between five and ten years.	23.3%	10
Between ten and fifteen years.	20.9%	9
Longer than 15 years	41.9%	18
<i>answered question</i>		43
<i>skipped question</i>		0

Findings of question 1 were that about 63% of the respondents have been working in the industry for longer than ten years, and 41.86% for longer than 15 years. This lends credibility to the data collected in that they have been around long enough to observe

Shared characteristics of Cape Town commercial production companies	
Question 2. What is your current job role? (Even if you are not working right at this moment, what position do	

you consider yourself as filling on a production team?)		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Agency Producer	0.0%	0
Exec Producer	8.1%	3
Producer	21.6%	8
Line Producer	8.1%	3
Production manager	21.6%	8
Production Coordinator	10.8%	4
Production Secretary	0.0%	0
Head of Production	0.0%	0
Art Department Co-ordinator	0.0%	0
Head of Department (Art Director, Wardrobe Mistress, Unit Manager, DOP, Gaffer, Key Grip etc)	29.7%	11
Other (please specify)		9
<i>answered question</i>		37
<i>skipped question</i>		6

Question 2. Continued What is your current job role? (Even if you are not working right at this moment, what position do you consider yourself as filling on a production team?)			
Number	Response Date	Other (please specify)	Categories
1	Oct 17, 2016 12:46 p.m.	art dpt. stylist, decorator, pack-shot assistant, props sourcing and buying	
2	Oct 17, 2016 10:29 a.m.	Freelance Hair & Make-up Artist	
3	Oct 17, 2016 9:10 a.m.	Make-up and hair	
4	Oct 17, 2016 9:04 a.m.	location scout	
5	Oct 17, 2016 8:31 a.m.	Production Designer	
6	Oct 17, 2016 6:56 a.m.	Assistant Director	
7	Oct 15, 2016 9:58 a.m.	Food stylist	
8	Oct 14, 2016 7:02 a.m.	Director (6 years prev)	
9	Oct 11, 2016 12:06 p.m.	Chaperone	

Notable findings for question 2 were that just over 70% of respondents worked in production and 29% worked in other departments including technical and creative.

Shared characteristics of Cape Town commercial production companies		
Question 3. Do you work freelance, permalance or full-time for a production company?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Freelance	66.7%	28
Permalance (more than 6 months of the year for the same company)	7.1%	3
Permalance over season, freelance during winter	7.1%	3
Full time	16.7%	7

Not applicable, I'm a freelance agency producer.	2.4%	1
Other (please specify)		1
<i>answered question</i>		42
<i>skipped question</i>		1
Number	Response Date	Other (please specify)
1	Oct 14, 2016 7:02 a.m.	I work part time on a permanent basis

Notable findings of question 3 were that only 16% of respondents work full-time for a production company.

Shared characteristics of Cape Town commercial production companies		
Question 4. On average, how many different production companies do you work with in a 12-month cycle?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 5	42.9%	18
Between 5 and 10	35.7%	15
More than 10	9.5%	4
I work full time for one company.	11.9%	5
<i>answered question</i>		42
<i>skipped question</i>		1

Findings of question 4 were that 79% of freelancers work for less than 10 production companies in a 12-month cycle.

Shared characteristics of Cape Town commercial production companies			
Question 5.			
How do you find work? Tick as many boxes as are applicable to you.			
Answer Options	Response Percent		Response Count
My agent gets me work.	24.3%		9
Production companies approach me directly.	75.7%		28
I approach production companies for work.	29.7%		11
I get recommended to production companies by my industry peers.	45.9%		17
Not applicable, I'm a freelance agency producer.	5.4%		2
Other (please specify)			6
answered question			37
skipped question			6
Number	Response Date	Other (please specify)	Categories
1	Oct 18, 2016 8:36 p.m.	I only work for one company	
2	Oct 17, 2016 12:46 p.m.	art directors, packshot specialists and propsmasters contact me directly	
3	Oct 14, 2016 7:02 a.m.	I work for one company	
4	Oct 11, 2016 6:12 a.m.	Permanently Employed	
5	Oct 8, 2016 4:33 p.m.	I market for work	
6	Oct 8, 2016 4:03 p.m.	Own the prodco	

Findings on Q5 were that most freelancers were approached directly by production companies or recommended by peers. Thus word of mouth is a crucial influencing factor on employment.. Only 24% of freelancers got work via their agents. Six respondents didn't complete the question. It's assumed that five of these are due to the fact that they work full time.

Shared characteristics of Cape Town commercial production companies				
Question 6. About how many of the commercial production companies you have worked for share the following organisational and operational characteristics? Tick as many as are applicable to your personal experience.				
Answer Options	Less than 5	Between 5 and 10	More than 10	Response Count
open plan offices or one office per production team	12	17	11	40
production teams of 7 or less	17	13	7	36
small permanent staff, they hire in freelancers on job to job basis	11	12	16	39
mostly use the same heads of department and production teams from year to year	8	22	9	39
mostly use the mostly same technical and support crew repeatedly on jobs (eg best boys, assistants, chaperones, PAs etc)	6	24	10	39
mostly use the same catering companies repeatedly	9	17	16	41
use local post production for editing, grading and final mix.	19	13	2	34
don't do post production locally	16	9	11	36
do local work mostly	29	5	0	34
do international facilitating work mostly	5	16	19	40
Other (please specify)				4
<i>answered question</i>				41
<i>skipped question</i>				2

Notable findings from this question is that the construction thereof may have been too complicated for the crew as the Low production work, low local usage of post production facilities. High usage same production teams and heads of department, catering companies, small

Question 7 When working on a commercial production, which of the following characteristics do you feel apply to the production process that you are part of? Please tick as many as are applicable to your personal experience.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
1. Production team consists of about 5 but no more than 7 people (producer, line producer/production manager, coordinator, office PA)	90.0%	36
2. Production teams are co-located (i.e. they work from the same space)	90.0%	36
3. Production office space is open plan or production teams working on same job have their own office space.	92.5%	37
4. There is a free and constant flow of communication between production team members	87.5%	35
5. Email trail is more important than a printed paper trail.	82.5%	33
6. Each team strives for continual improvement and minimal wastage of resources	52.5%	21
7. Essential information regarding the expected deliverable/end product is available to all or most production team members i.e. storyboard, treatment, shotlist, line item budget	65.0%	26
8. each team member knows upfront what their role and responsibilities	85.0%	34
9. each team member knows what their level of decision-making authority is with regard to budget spend	87.5%	35
Other (please specify)		5
answered question		40
skipped question		3

Noteworthy findings from Q 7 shows that 78% of the characteristics of the production company processes were observed as being present by more than 80% of the respondents.

Shared characteristics of Cape Town commercial production companies		
Question 8. On average, how long have the production companies you work with been around?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 5 years	0.0%	0
Between 5 and 10 years	26.2%	11
more than 10 years	50.0%	21
for as long as I have been in the industry	19.0%	8
I have no idea.	4.8%	2
answered question		42
skipped question		1

Findings from question 8 show that half of the production companies that the respondents work for have been in the industry for more than ten years.

Shared characteristics of Cape Town commercial production companies		
Question 9. To what do you attribute the ongoing success of some Cape Town commercial production companies over others?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Some producers make a bigger effort to build relationships with clients, agency and international production companies.	74.4%	29
Some production companies have better leadership (exec producers) than others.	64.1%	25
Some production companies have better marketing techniques than others.	53.8%	21
Some production companies are more attractive to work for as a freelancer, so they can consistently deliver the best service and product because they have the most experienced freelancers always wanting to work with them.	59.0%	23
Some production companies have better financial management systems than others.	48.7%	19
Some production companies have better communication structures in place.	35.9%	14
Some production companies are more service-oriented than others i.e. they try harder to make the client/agency/international prod company happy.	76.9%	30
Other (please specify)		6
answered question		39
skipped question		4

Number	Response Date	Other (please specify)
1	Oct 18, 2016 5:52 a.m.	no consistent attribute, all the above play a role during build up to success, but in most cases success is cyclical
2	Oct 17, 2016 12:46 p.m.	I cannot comment on production/agency relations as I am not involved at all.
3	Oct 17, 2016 6:56 a.m.	Trusted working relationships with clients that have been built over years
4	Oct 14, 2016 7:02 a.m.	n/a
5	Oct 12, 2016 9:09 p.m.	Having checked this box, there are, nevertheless, many situations in which in-fighting between international client line-producer and local director have occurred.
6	Oct 8, 2016 12:34 p.m.	Some production companies require more hours put in on a daily basis than others

Shared characteristics of Cape Town commercial production companies			
Question 10. What do you enjoy most about working with Cape Town commercial production companies?			
Answer Options		Response Count	
		30	
<i>answered question</i>		30	
<i>skipped question</i>		13	
Number	Response Date	Response Text	Categories
1	Oct 19, 2016 5:08	THE "YES WE CAN" ATTITUDE	
2	Oct 18, 2016 8:36	Constant supply of work	
3	Oct 18, 2016 2:00	The teamwork	
4	Oct 18, 2016 10:15	I have only worked for my own company, so like everything about the way we work :)	
5	Oct 18, 2016 5:52 a.m.	transparent budget and schedule information; backing when things go wrong, or when clients shift the goalposts, or plans need to be revised during preproduction due to better understanding of what is actually required for the specific commercial.	
6	Oct 17, 2016 6:26	not much! Just left the industry!	
7	Oct 17, 2016 12:53	The money	
8	Oct 17, 2016 12:46	any commercial production company is good - I enjoy what I do!!	
9	Oct 17, 2016 10:29	Professionalism	
10	Oct 17, 2016 9:10	The diversity of jobs, locations and crew. Well organised sets. Crew friendliness	
11	Oct 17, 2016 8:31	The job itself is usually very interesting.	
12	Oct 17, 2016 8:31	The ones I tend to work with have a pleasant work ethic. Work hard ,have fun.	
13	Oct 17, 2016 8:31	Not sure why you ask "enjoy".... this is work. Good parts are: working free lance/being in a lot of different places like outdoors, nature, interesting locations/meeting new people.	
14	Oct 17, 2016 6:56	In general we are passionate about what we do and take pride in offering a premium product that matches or excels compared to other international companies	
15	Oct 15, 2016 9:58	Sense of community and friendship	
16	Oct 14, 2016 7:02	I work for AfrikaBurn so not relevant	
17	Oct 13, 2016 6:09	The challenge of foreign service work	
18	Oct 13, 2016 9:45	the integrity to high production values	
19	Oct 12, 2016 9:09	Professionalism.	
20	Oct 11, 2016 6:12 a.m.	Good energy in the office.	
21	Oct 9, 2016 6:30 a.m.	I like the freedom to choose whom I work with	
22	Oct 9, 2016 6:08	The diversity of the people and the relationships that form. The owners of the companies I work for care deeply about their clients' needs but also appreciate the importance of retaining good freelancers and ensuring that both above and below the line is taken care of.	
23	Oct 8, 2016 4:33	The variety	
24	Oct 8, 2016 4:03	Exposure to international markets	
25	Oct 8, 2016 12:55 p.m.	The diversity of countries and products you facilitate for	
26	Oct 8, 2016 12:34 p.m.	The end result and the income.	
27	Oct 8, 2016 11:48 a.m.	Level of expertise	
28	Oct 7, 2016 2:34 p.m.	The productions are short and sweet, always different, and the budgets are bigger on commercials	
29	Oct 6, 2016 8:06 p.m.	The food and fuel	
30	Oct 6, 2016 7:02 p.m.	Love my job and being freelance.	

The most notable finding here is that 13 of the respondents declined to answer.

4.3 Sample Group 2 - Production company executives and owners

Survey size: 6

Surveys completed: 6

Analysis of Survey Data

Cape Town commercial production companies characteristics (Owners and Exec Producers)		
Question 1. How long has your company been producing/facilitating commercials in Cape Town?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than ten years.	16.7%	1
Between ten and fifteen years.	33.3%	2
Longer than 15 years	50.0%	3
<i>answered question</i>		6
<i>skipped question</i>		0

Noted: Only one of the companies has been in operation for less than ten years.

Cape Town commercial production companies characteristics (Owners and Exec Producers)		
Question 2. What type of work generates the bulk of your annual business income?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
local commercials	16.7%	1
international commercials (service work)	83.3%	5
post production	0.0%	0
consulting services	0.0%	0
Other (please specify)	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		6
<i>skipped question</i>		0

Noted: The bulk of their income is generated by international commercials (service work) where their clients are foreign production houses or agencies.

Cape Town commercial production companies characteristics (Owners and Exec Producers)		
Question 3. What position do you hold in your business? Tick as many as applicable.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Owner	83.3%	5
Co-owner	16.7%	1
Executive Management eg Managing Director	33.3%	2
Executive Producer	100.0%	6
Other (please specify)		0
<i>answered question</i>		6
<i>skipped question</i>		0

Noted: owners are also executive producers.

Cape Town commercial production companies characteristics (Owners and Exec Producers)			
Question 4. How does your company market its services to new and existing clients? List the numbers that apply in the box below.			
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	
1. We use paid marketing channels like Cannes and other international industry festivals or conferences to present our work.	40.0%	2	
2. We advertise in local industry directories like The Whole Lot and Film Makers Guide	0.0%	0	
3. We advertise in international directories like Shots.	20.0%	1	
4. We nurture relationships with existing clients.	20.0%	1	
5. We use various paid marketing channels.	0.0%	0	
6. We rely on word of mouth.	20.0%	1	
7. We have a dedicated department focused on marketing and procuring new business.	0.0%	0	
8. We use social media and digital media to drive traffic to our website and build our brand equity.	0.0%	0	
9. We use our website to showcase our work, clients and latest showreel.	0.0%	0	
List here:		4	
<i>answered question</i>			5
<i>skipped question</i>			1
Number	Response Date	List here:	Categories
1	Oct 20, 2016 11:39 a.m.	1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9	
2	Oct 19, 2016 9:18 a.m.	123469	
3	Oct 19, 2016 4:46 a.m.	249	
4	Oct 18, 2016 1:19 p.m.	1234689	

Although the method of data collection on this question was clumsy the data reflects that the owners of the companies do their own networking and direct selling to find new clients and nurture relationships with existing clients. They do not use paid media channels but do use their website to showcase their work.

Cape Town commercial production companies characteristics (Owners and Exec Producers)			
Question 5. On average, how many international advertising (branding) agencies do you work with in a 12 month cycle?			
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	
Less than 5	33.3%	2	
Between 5 and 10	16.7%	1	
More than 10	50.0%	3	
<i>answered question</i>			6
<i>skipped question</i>			0

This finding illustrates that the advertising agencies that the producers work with are mostly international.

Cape Town commercial production companies characteristics (Owners and Exec Producers)		
Question 6. On average, how many local advertising (branding) agencies do you work with in a 12 month cycle?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than 5	100.0%	6
Between 5 and 10	0.0%	0
More than 10	0.0%	0
<i>answered question</i>		6
<i>skipped question</i>		0

This finding illustrates that the advertising agencies that the producers work with are mostly international.

Cape Town commercial production companies characteristics (Owners and Exec Producers)			
Question 7. What is the average length of time that you have had a business-to-business relationship with your three biggest clients?			
Answer Options		Response Count	
		6	
<i>answered question</i>		6	
<i>skipped question</i>		0	
Number	Response Date	Response Text	Years
1	Oct 20, 2016 11:39 a.m.	100	15
2	Oct 19, 2016 9:18 a.m.	15	15
3	Oct 19, 2016 4:46 a.m.	71	71% of 15 yrs = 11 yrs
4	Oct 18, 2016 2:24 p.m.	62	62% of 15 yrs = 9 yrs
5	Oct 18, 2016 1:19 p.m.	15	15
6	Oct 18, 2016 11:20 a.m.	80	15

This data may not be an accurate reflection of the truth as the tool used by the researcher to measure was poorly selected. Other data collected however points to the relationships between producers and their longstanding clients having existed for as long as the company has existed.

Cape Town commercial production companies characteristics (Owners and Exec Producers)			
Question 8. Which of the following organisational and operational characteristics apply to your company? Tick as many as are applicable.			
Answer Options		Response Percent	Response Count
we have open plan offices or one office per production team		83.3%	5
we facilitate and encourage an open flow of communication throughout departments		66.7%	4
we maintain a small permanent staff and hire in freelancers on a job to job basis		83.3%	5
we mostly use the same heads of department, freelance producers and line producers from year to year		83.3%	5
we mostly use the same camera, technical and support crew repeatedly on jobs (eg best boys, assistants, chaperones, PAs etc)		66.7%	4
we mostly use the same suppliers from year to year		100.0%	6
we use local post production for editing, grading and final mix.		16.7%	1
we don't do post production locally		83.3%	5
we produce local commercials mostly		16.7%	1
we produce and facilitate international commercials		100.0%	6
we have an accounts department run by a permanent staff member		100.0%	6
Other (please specify)			1
<i>answered question</i>			6
<i>skipped question</i>			0
Number	Response Date	Other (please specify)	Categories
1	Oct 20, 2016 11:39 a.m.	4 staff members in accounts dept	

The findings of this illustrate that all the producers work on international commercials, facilitating these production for production companies abroad. It's inferred that the work they produce therefore is of an international standard.

Cape Town commercial production companies characteristics (Owners and Exec Producers)			
Question 9. How does your company recruit crew?			
Answer Options		Response Percent	Response Count
We approach crewing agents to recruit for us.		100.0%	6
Crewing agents advise us when freelance crew become available or when new crew enter the industry.		33.3%	2
We approach freelancers directly for work.		66.7%	4
Freelancers approach us directly for work.		66.7%	4
Freelancers are recommended to us by crew known and trusted by us.		83.3%	5
Other (please specify)		16.7%	1
<i>answered question</i>			6
<i>skipped question</i>			0
Number	Response Date	Other (please specify)	Categories

1	Oct 20, 2016 11:39 a.m.	n/a	
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These findings corroborate the data from the freelance crew which illustrates that the crew are a *de facto* community of best practice, known and trusted for their expertise and ability to deliver good work, consistently.

Cape Town commercial production companies characteristics (Owners and Exec Producers)			
Question 10. Which of the following characteristics apply to the production process of commercials in your business? Please tick as many as are applicable.			
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	
Production team consists of about 5 but no more than 7 people (producer, line producer/production manager, coordinator, office PA)	66.7%	4	
Production teams are co-located (i.e. they work from the same space)	100.0%	6	
Production office space is open plan or production teams working on same job have their own office space.	83.3%	5	
There is a free and constant flow of communication between production team members	83.3%	5	
Email trail is more important than a printed paper trail.	83.3%	5	
Each team strives for continual improvement and minimal wastage of resources	83.3%	5	
Essential information regarding the expected deliverable/end product is available to all or most production team members i.e. storyboard, treatment, shotlist, line item budget	100.0%	6	
each team member knows upfront what their role and responsibilities	83.3%	5	
each team member knows what their level of decision-making authority is with regard to budget spend	100.0%	6	
each job is reconciled by the line producer or production manager	100.0%	6	
we encourage skills transference in departments from senior to junior crew	83.3%	5	
Other (please specify)		1	
answered question		6	
skipped question		0	
Number	Response Date	Other (please specify)	Categories
1	Oct 19, 2016 4:46 a.m.	production team is never more than 2/3 people for average size shoot. not inc accountant.	

The high percentage of all these processes indicate that these productions are managed in a very a lean and agile way with a high focus on delivery, open communication, shared responsibility, accountability and self-mobilisation of team players who share a common purpose.

Cape Town commercial production companies characteristics (Owners and Exec Producers)			
Question 11. To what do you attribute the ongoing success of your company? Tick as many as you feel are applicable.			
Answer Options		Response Percent	Response Count
We make a big effort to build and nurture relationships with clients, agency and international production companies.		100.0%	6
We have strong leadership skills in top management.		100.0%	6
We use effective marketing techniques.		33.3%	2
We strive to attract the best freelance crew so that we can consistently deliver the best service and product.		83.3%	5
We have strong financial management systems in place.		50.0%	3
We prioritize open flow of communication.		33.3%	2
We are highly service-oriented and go to great lengths to consistently deliver the best service we can to the client/agency/international prod company.		66.7%	4
We keep our overheads low through our staffing structure		100.0%	6
We have a rigorous recon and accounting procedure.		83.3%	5
Other (please specify)			1
answered question			6
skipped question			0
Number	Response Date	Other (please specify)	Categories
1	Oct 20, 2016 11:39 a.m.	keep overheads as as low as we can	

These findings indicate that strong leadership, strong client relations and low overheads are likely key contributing factors in these production companies success.

Cape Town commercial production companies characteristics (Owners and Exec Producers)							
Question 12. Please rate your awareness of the following concepts (without using Google! ;-))							
Answer Options	Never heard of it	Heard the word but don't know anything about it	Heard of it and know a bit about it	Know a lot about it because I've read or been part of discussions about it	Know about it and apply it in our business	Rating Average	Response Count
Agile	0	1	2	1	0	3.00	4
Lean thinking	0	3	1	0	0	2.25	4
Shamrock Model	5	0	0	0	0	1.00	5
Other (please specify)							2
<i>answered question</i>							5
<i>skipped question</i>							1
Number	Response Date	Other (please specify)	Categories				
1	Oct 19, 2016 9:18 a.m.	Wont let me tick the other boxes - but dont know them					
2	Oct 19, 2016 4:46 a.m.	All new to me					

Analysis of this data reveals that agile and lean are not foreign concepts to these producers but they do not recognize them as relevant or present in their operations. None of them have heard of the Shamrock model either.

Cape Town commercial production companies characteristics		
Question 13. In your experience, has the way that advertising (branding) agencies engage with your business changed in the last 10 years?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
yes	66.7%	4
no	33.3%	2
<i>answered question</i>		6
<i>skipped question</i>		0

Cape Town commercial production companies characteristics		
Question 14. If you answered Yes or No in question 13, please give a reason for your answer.		
Answer Options	Response Count	
	6	
<i>answered question</i>	6	
<i>skipped question</i>	0	
Number	Response Date	Response Text
1	Oct 20, 2016 11:39 a.m.	I answered no
2	Oct 19, 2016 9:18 a.m.	The loyalty that was once expected is no longer there - possibly due to the old guard moving on and younger producers coming in who have worked with other production companies.
3	Oct 19, 2016 4:46 a.m.	As media formats change so do agency requirements, this has led to a change in creative / in house structure in agencies which means that production companies have had to alter the way they supply their service. keeping on top of technology is key.
4	Oct 18, 2016 2:24 p.m.	They are less decisive - I dunno what do you think?
5	Oct 18, 2016 1:19 p.m.	Far greater use of Social Media and other electronic platforms by agencies when seeking services. Transfer of data, info and showreels etc via electronic means, rather than being presented in face to face meetings, so less personal interface and more reliance on being technically up to date and savvy. Much quicker turnaround as a result
6	Oct 18, 2016 11:20 a.m.	Didn't answer yes.

4.4 Sample Group 3 & 4 -Findings from Interviews and questionnaires with executive producers

Analysis of interview and questionnaire data

What follows is a short narrative of the findings from the interviews conducted with two producers and the email responses received from two other producers. is that Four producers received the same questions as per the attached annexure A. Two interviews were conducted and two email responses were received from the producers.

The questions and interviews were originally intended to identify characteristics of the commercial production companies but as the study progressed they served to complement and corroborate data being collected via surveys.

More importantly though interviews served to provide observations and opinion from producers about their view of agencies in the context of this study, for which they are well qualified to provide based on the significant length of time that they have spent working with advertising agencies on a local and international scale. These views in particular relate to the bigger context to which the study relates i.e. the traditional advertising model and the question regarding its relevance.

Company characteristics that were common to all four of the executive producers' companies:

Legal entity:	Pty Limited
Years in operation:	more than 10
Specialist services:	all did international commercials
Organisational structure:	all single owner
Management	All owner managed
Staffing structure	small core except for one which had large permanent staff
Communication	3 encouraged a free flow of communication One did not engage about this aspect
Financial management	all had permanent accounts staff

Three female and one male producer made up the sample that were asked the following question:

What is your understanding of the traditional advertising agency model and, in your opinion, is it still relevant or does it need to change?

The table below illustrates some of the most relevant findings.

Three of the four producers are women known personally to the researcher in a work and social capacity. As a result they were very cooperative in sharing information.

One of the producers is a male not known personally to the researcher. The incomplete responses received from the male producer could be attributed to this fact.

Producer	Agency model still relevant?	What's wrong with it and what's the way forward?
1. CHE	"too complex to answer"	n/a
2.BGH	No	• Big agencies do not have the ability to adapt. • And I don't think agencies have really changed the way they think. • They're big, they're monolithic they're unable to turn their ship around. • Agency producers are not effective and are too young • And they're too nervous of the new model because they don't know where they're going to derive their revenue stream from and digital means less of a revenue and <i>that's</i> the problem.
3. JGG	No	• not at all relevant anymore. its archaic and the only reason i recon they are still in existence is that the ad industry has marketed itself into the position they are - ie they are probably their biggest client themselves, and have made sure to put out as much press and pr and editorial justifying their role and position (SIC) • they are dinosaurs - all clietns money does is oil the machines that are agencies with their massive overheads and staff rosters (SIC) • agencies are no longer focused on creative, they are focused on process – (SIC) • a brands money is not being spent as it was 30 years ago in an agency, when time was spent on "Creating" great campaigns and ideas - today the "creative" bililngs and time spent are minimal and all the superflous roles are what costs clients. how can someone still take a commission for placing an ad on a particular TV slot? its bizarre!! (SIC) • im amazed more clients have not walked away from their traditional agencies already (SIC) • consumers are more intellegent today and do not respect hard sell or intrusive advertsing - consumers want value - whatever shape or form that takes (SIC) • smaller independant creative shops will succeed going forward -

		where time billed is time spent on working on what resonates with consumers. (SIC)
4. CMF	Not sure	• there does seem to be a kind of unnecessary amount of um <i>their</i> client service, you know what I mean, • like account managers, • have evidenced poor relationships between agency and client

The comments above illustrate the negativity toward agencies that are perceived as redundant by some producers and why.

Groups 3 & 4. Findings from interviews with agency executives and staff

Agency Executive	Shortcomings of traditional agency model? Is it still relevant?	Description of agency of the future?
1. LHB	Only big agencies get big work, agency networks are unpleasant to work with "At the top the politics are murderous."	There's not just one solution. Smaller specialist agencies will deliver specialist services, some independent and some part of bigger networks. Some global network allows smaller acquisitions to continue to operate semi-independently
2. WLLB	Work in silos, big bosses in glass containers, rest in open plan, clients expect more, don't offer value for money, shotgun approach doesn't work, information on a need to know basis	Deliver to clients that expect more, different smaller specialist agencies to do the work, talent will move from agency to client, key decision made by client in house, not by agency, will need to be in tune with forward-thinking clients
Agency staff	Shortcomings of traditional agency model? Is it still relevant?	Description of agency of the future?
3. SKBC	Teams are silo'd, each team working on same campaign not talking to each other, doing own	Open communication channels between client and agency teams facilitated by client

	thing, poor communication between teams working for client, lack of efficiency, ineffective client services	services, Client services should play more role of project lead to ensure unified
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The findings from these interviews are that there is not just one solution to the agency model problem and that it may be possible for various specialist agencies in future to fulfill all the clients needs.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

5.1 Interpretation, discussion and insights

It was anticipated upfront that primary research would prove that the overarching factors contributing towards organisational resilience of the commercial production companies are an underlying organisational culture that lean, agile and service-oriented.

For this reason it was necessary to make a concerted effort to prevent cognitive bias. The surveys and interview questions had to be very carefully crafted to obtain the most general and neutral observations possible with the aim of being able to identify from those answers any and all characteristics that correlate with the characteristics identified

The survey responses provide a very comprehensive view of the characteristics inherent to companies that produce commercials, in particular service companies that facilitate the production of international commercials for international production companies.

The results illustrate that the leadership, culture, people and systems in these organisations follow certain themes which align with lean thinking agile project methodology and a Shamrock business model:

Insights from the data indicate that the strengths that are prominent in these companies relate to their strong leadership and management skills, leadership and work ethic cultivated.

Rich culture and highly skilled and motivated crew

- The length of service of freelancers and skills that go with that appear high with most of the freelancers working for 80% of the companies.
- It appears that the same production companies hire the same crew repeatedly. These crew are flexible to change and able to adjust and adapt to changing demands of the job.
- Trust is built up over time through working with the same companies, same teams, known work environment, works like a machine (or Toyota assembly line)

- Strong focus on relationships between crew and production companies, and production companies and clients crew year after year resulting in strong culture and work ethic
- skills transference is similar to an apprenticeship where juniors learn from and senior crew members
- crew like about industry varies from 'yes we can' attitudes, professionalism, interesting, sense of community and friendship, expertise, transparency, loving the job, being passionate about it, pleasant work ethic and teamwork.

Strong leadership

- owner managed companies with a lot of experience are focused on client satisfaction (service industry) and adapting to clients changing needs thereby retaining clients and nurturing relationships with them
- They market their work actively through networking and have not become complacent. Some of them rely solely on word of mouth because their work is so high end that they do not need to market.
- They nurture and maintain good relations with their clients as well as their staff and build trust with both by looking after crew and consistently delivering high quality work for clients.

Agile project offices and project methodologies

- Experienced crew and heads of department know what they are doing upfront and self-mobilise their teams
- Small core staff with experts that understand company culture and consistently deliver high quality work and are relied on to do so
- Same freelance teams working together – able to develop a rhythm that's efficient but not boring because teams change from job to job
- small powerful agile teams promote free and continual flow of communication facilitated by companies. Open plan offices, key deliverables for client are known upfront and this information is shared with whole production team and key HODs that taking responsibility for their teams and communicating to them. Strong and clear communication channels are a repeating theme

Lean thinking

- there's a theme of continual improvement of the system to make it more efficient eg dropbox used by production with the shotlist, treatment, budget etc so all production team has access to it
- skills transference is similar to an apprenticeship where juniors learn from and senior crew members
- continual improvement and minimizing waste of time to maximize productivity is referred to by both crew and producers.
- Shamrock – core executive producers and financial staff, permalance and trusted group of freelancers, work with same sub-contractors. The characteristics of this kind of staffing model used by production companies are corroborated by data from crew and from producers in both surveys and interviews. Even though the model is not named or recognised as such by the businesses themselves, it illustrates the Shamrock model is present.
- limited waste of resources by keeping overheads low and teams small and agile. So that fewer crew can earn better than more crew earning less.

5.2 Link to prior literature and/or theory

It appears from the data that least four of the five pillars of Gardner's resilient organization namely articulated leadership, culture, people and systems appear to feature very prominently as characteristics of commercial production companies in Cape Town.

Agile project methodology is evident where The Agile manifesto (2001) sets out key principles of project organisation that value relationships over processes, working products over paperwork, customer collaboration over contract negotiation and responding to change instead of rigidly following a plan.

It does appear that the processes of lean thinking are at work in these production companies and that Liker's philosophy of continuous business improvement through more effective business processes, service quality and cost saving (Liker, 2004) is evident. It appears that Lean is well suited to production houses (Leung, 2016).

5.3 Answer the objectives

It's believed by the author that the first to objectives have been achieved in that

- a) the findings do illustrate and identify clearly the details of various management and operational processes and procedures and that these have a strong focus on company culture, leadership, highly skilled people, and efficient systems.
- b) The second objective to explore and understand the management structures, methodologies and conceptual frameworks at work within these production companies was achieved as they have been related to documented phenomena referred to in the literature review namely agile, lean and of a shamrock staffing nature.
- c) The third objective does not appear to have been achieved as there has been insufficient data collected on the local advertising model, to gauge whether these findings could be used as a foundation to develop and test a new and more resilient model of brand communication agency (advertising agency).

5.4 Implications of findings for future practises

The author believes that the business model identified and used by these production companies could be named the PRODCO model and could be replicated in other project-based business to business sectors where client relationships are of a personal and longstanding nature.

5.5 Final conclusions including an evaluation of the success of the research and possible future actions/and or research (heuristic value of the study)

The outcome of this research could be used to further investigate and design a lean and resilient business model for a new brand communications agency as an alternative to the existing business models employed by the majority of leading South African advertising agencies.

This agency business model could draw on the newly named PRODCO business model by emulating the *modus operandi* of these established Cape Town commercial production companies that formed part of this study.

5.6 Ethical implications and how they were addressed

The surveys are anonymous and the full names of the interviewees have not been included in the report to retain their anonymity. Due to the nature of the information contained in the interviews and emails from the producers, the researcher feels it prudent to protect their identity by referring to them only by their initials and not their full names nor their production company in the report.

5.7 Limitations and delimitations of the study

This research project did not include long form production companies based in Cape Town, which also produce commercials, nor commercial production companies outside of Cape Town.

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7. Annexures

1. Consent forms
2. Permission letters
3. Ethics clearance approval letter
4. Transcript of interview with Leon Jacobs
5. Transcript of interview with Clare van Zyl
6. Transcript of interview with Bev Wynn
7. Transcript of interview with Warren lodge
8. Survey results summary document

Interview questions asked of Cape Town commercial producers are:

1. Please state your full name and the name of your production company.
2. Please describe the services that your business offers and to whom you market your services?
3. Do you own or rent your business premises?
4. When was your business established and what motivated you to start your business?
5. What type of legal entity is your business eg PTY LTD, partnership, Close Corporation?
6. What is your full-time permanent staff compliment and how many people work permanently for you on a part-time basis?
7. How would you describe your top management/leadership and operational structures?
8. How do you go about recruiting staff for projects?
9. Describe the process of how your business generates income eg who are your clients, how did you find them and how do you keep them?
10. What is the approximate average length of time that you have had a business-to-business relationship with your three biggest clients?
11. Prior to this interview, have you ever heard of or do you have any knowledge of the following terms: Agile, Lean Thinking, Design Thinking, Shamrock Business Model.
12. If yes, have you deliberately used any of these approaches in your operational process or procedures?
13. To what do you attribute your business's ongoing success?
14. What is your understanding of the traditional advertising agency model and, in your opinion, is it still relevant or does it need to change?

These questions were put into a survey for analysis purposes:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WHXD7FX>