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Deutsch Picks Up \$100 Million PNC Bank Account

Agency Charged With Rebranding Marketer Amid Consumer Skepticism of Financial Institutions

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NEW YORK (AdAge.com) -- Deutsch, New York, has been awarded creative and media duties on PNC Bank's estimated \$100 million account after a pitch, and faces the challenge of rebranding the bank at a time when consumers are skeptical of financial institutions.



The Pittsburgh-based marketer began a review early this year, shortly after it acquired National City bank in a \$5.6 billion deal. PNC issued a request for proposals, tapping Atlanta-based consultancy Bedford Group to manage the process.

Interpublic Group of Cos.' Deutsch, which brought banking experience to the table from its days on the Bank of America account, bested three agencies in the final round of the pitch: sibling McCann Erickson, Publicis Groupe's Leo Burnett and Omnicom Group's TBWA, executives familiar with the matter said.

Agency representatives either declined to comment or did not immediately return calls, while a PNC spokesman didn't respond by press time.

The account review was a blow to the two key incumbents: Southfield, Mich.-based Doner, which had handled the PNC account since 2001, and Campbell Mithun, which had handled National City since 2007. PNC had invited the shops to defend the business.

Battered by the recession, many large banks and financial institutions have slashed marketing budgets and been slow to alter their messaging to [reassure wary consumers](#). Smaller brands have opted for [more-humorous approaches](#), though PNC may have an added challenge, as it accepted TARP money as part of its FDIC-brokered deal to rescue the failing National City.

Even at a time when agencies are hungry to bring in new accounts, some top shops were skeptical of the category, and this particular account. "We weren't interested; it felt toxic to us," one agency executive told Ad Age at the start of the review.

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Jeremy Mullman contributed to this report.

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