

3 chats up eight

SYDNEY: Eight agencies this week presented credentials to 3 mobile in a process that will see three finalists selected for a pitch next week.

Incumbent The Moulton Agency is facing competition from BMF, Clemenger BBDO Sydney, Arnold, the campaign palace/red cell, FNL, Lowe Hunt and Saatchi & Saatchi's retail division, Team Saatchi.

The account's estimated worth is \$40 million to \$45 million. Advertising spend figures from Nielsen Media Research show 3 spent \$31 million on main media in the 12 months to September, a figure that excludes online, promotional spending, catalogues, in-store POS and production costs.

The pitch process is being handled by consultancy P3. Founder Darren Woolley said the purpose of the review is "to make sure they [3 mobile] have the best arrangement". "They are very keen to have it resolved before Christmas," he added.

The mobile marketer consolidated its account with The Moulton Agency in March 2004, adding the above-the-line component handled by DDB to Moulton's DM portion.

This review is the first for the account since 2001 when DDB went up against Whybin Lawrence TBWA and Saatchi & Saatchi, and helped launch the 3 mobile brand in 2002.

The Moulton Agency CEO Tom Moulton said he was not surprised by the client's decision to call a review.

"The telco business is the fastest game in town; it's appropriate they have a look around," he said. "They haven't looked at the market for about four years."

Andrea Sophocleous