

**"This 'telephone' will never work" Western Union internal memo, 1878**

**"Radio has no future" Lord Kelvin, British mathematician, 1897**

**"A weekly IFA paper?" Mike Richards, 1985**

**"Mea culpa, mea maxima culpa" Mike Richards, 2005**

1985 was the year Robert Graves finally said "goodbye to all that" and Heinrich Boll joined one of his silent angels. Other notable literary events of 1985 saw "Hawksmoor" win the Whitbread Prize and "Oranges are not the only fruit" win new novel of the year.

In 1985 I was Media Director of a marketing agency called The Moorgate Group (which has now gone the way of Graves and Boll) working within an Evensong's distance from Nicholas Hawksmoor's church in Spitalfields - long-time home of London's major fruit market. (What a fantastic link. Ed.) It was here where I made the prophetic misjudgement that the new IFA weekly title, preparing to be launched that year, would never work.

This is the same person who professed that the new BBC sitcom would never catch on because who on God's earth would be interested in a load of east Londoners fighting in and around a manky old pub owned by a villain in real life and hordes of people constantly making tea? (Cue tinny drum music)

Sitting in my office that year playing with my transformers (a man must get his pleasures where he can) having just parked my company Sinclair C5 and sporting my new Goth look listening to Paul Hardcastle's "19" (did everyone's copy jump?) I could not see a gap in the market to replace the existing duopoly of Planned Savings and Money Management. And what would be written about every week? Tony Wickenden giving advice on fighting in pubs and his favourite teas, I assumed?

Media planning was easy in those days - no satellite, no Internet (why has Jenna Jameson not got a regular column in MM? She's better looking than Darius McDermott), only a smattering of commercial radio stations and because I was capable of swearing like a trooper at the age of six, media buying was simple too.

So, mea culpa. Guilty as charged. The advent of Money Marketing spurned many imitators, which makes my job much harder now. But if the man who came selling the idea to me (who now resides alongside Heinrich and Robert in that great publishing venture in the sky) gets the online version of this - sorry I was wrong, Anthony, but thanks for being one of the few posh people who laughed at my gags.