

# Giancarlo Livraghi – work and books

Giancarlo Livraghi has a degree in philosophy (Milan State University.) He is basically a writer, but he has been involved actively in business in Italy and internationally, with an extended record of success.

Early in his career he became a copywriter in advertising. Much to his surprise, he was promoted into “management”, as what they now call a “creative director” – and then more. In 1966 he was appointed CEO of McCann-Erickson, which five years later became the largest advertising agency in Italy. In 1971 he became chairman of the European new business committee and head of Southern Europe (happily nicknamed “the garlic belt”.) In 1975 he was moved to New York as executive vp of McCann-Erickson International.

He returned to Italy in 1980 as the chairman and majority partner of Livraghi, Ogilvy & Mather, then a small agency that grew thirtyfold in the following years. He left the agency business in 1993 and he is continuing to study human communication and culture – as well as consulting on marketing and business strategy.

He worked for many companies, large and small, national and international. Including American Express, American Home Products, AT&T, Bayer, Beecham, Bulgari, Coca-Cola, Colgate, Compaq, Corn Products, Du Pont, Exxon, Fiat, Ford, General Foods, General Motors, Gillette, Goodyear, Heinz, Jacobs-Suchard, Johnson, Kraft, Martini, Mattel, Miles, Nabisco, Nestlé, Olivetti, l’Oréal, Polaroid, Seagram, Shell, Tampax, Triumph, all divisions of Unilever, and several others – with many remarkable results.

His relationship with clients was never limited to marketing, advertising and other forms of business communication. He was always deeply involved in the strategies and the daily problems of companies, brands and products. Full commitment continues in his current work.

He is a “militant” advocate of net freedom and culture. In 1994 he was a founder, and the first chairman, of ALCEI *Electronic Frontiers Italy*.

He wrote several hundred papers, articles, lessons etc. over the years, on communication and marketing; as well as on the internet.

In 1997 he started his website, [gandalf.it](http://gandalf.it), mostly in Italian, but partly also in English. Four of his monthly columns in Italian magazines are continuing online. A keynote speaker in several national and international events – including the seven Italian major conventions on business communication, from the first in 1972 to the latest in 2001.

His work in recent years includes *Il nuovo libro della pubblicità* (1997, third edition 2005), in 2000 a book about business online *La coltivazione dell’internet*, in 2001 a book about the use of the internet by people *L’umanità dell’internet* and a shorter book on e-business *Le imprese e l’internet*.

In 2004 he published *Il potere della stupidità* in Italian (third edition 2008) – a development of his comments in a series of articles that started in English in 1996. In 2007, with Riccardo Puglisi, he added an extended update to the Italian edition of Darrell Huff’s *How to Lie with Statistics*.

*The Power of Stupidity* was published as a book in English in 2009 and *El poder de la estupidez* in Spanish in 2010.