

Media Philosophy at theAgency

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For almost twenty years, I've been involved in Media Buying and Planning, but this is the first time someone has asked me to put my philosophy in writing! And while I am aware that I have an approach that is my own which is based on solid training, a lot of practical experience and a never-ending quest to learn as much as I can about all things related to media, putting my philosophy down on paper was pretty daunting. Nevertheless, I will attempt to capture the thought process and analytics that goes into the creation of a media recommendation for our clients at theAgency....and while I can certainly put this into prose, you will be relieved to see it in bullet points! If at the end, you have questions, I hope you will call, email or drop by theAgency and we can talk about our approach to media and how it relates to your product or category.

Here are some of the steps and what needs to happen to devise a solid media approach:

- It is important to have a background and education in how each medium works: its strengths and weaknesses, how it is bought, what research is available and how the inventory is sold.
- Equally critical – or perhaps even more so is to get fully immersed in the client's business and the relevant category.
- Media planning is a logical process guided by tons of research with a huge dose of common sense.
- Go by the (syndicated research) numbers, but get a feel for the environment. Know the publications, radio stations, etc.
- Never forget the client's objectives and allow those objectives to guide the marketing process.
 - Target Audience(s): who the client wants to reach both in terms of demographics and psychographic considerations
 - Geography: what area needs to be covered (national, local, or a variety of markets)
 - Seasonality/Timing: what scheduling patterns will work best?
 - Creative Considerations
 - Budget: how much it will take to support adequate repetition to the right target?
- Speak English when talking with clients. While the industry is filled with jargon that must be learned, there's no reason to use it when discussing media plans with our clients.
- Negotiate, negotiate, and negotiate some more – but with a light touch. You never know if you can get a lower rate or more audience unless you ask, but there's no reason to be difficult with salespeople, who can be a great resource when needed.
- Media is always changing, so spend time each day learning about what's happening. Keep up with the myriad of new media as well as the advances of the more “traditional” media.

And how does this relate to my approach to the Internet and other emerging media?

Never has there more a more exciting time in media with so much to choose from – and yet, the challenge of creating a media plan that satisfies the objectives and obtains the desired results has never been more complicated. theAgency has the knowledge and ability to fully integrate a client's creative message into any medium – whether it is a more traditional medium or an emerging one like Search, Internet Banner Ads, e-mail, etc.

- In Online Media, as with any media plan, the determining question is: What is the client trying to accomplish? You also need to know how to measure results. Is the objective awareness/brand preference or a response (click-throughs and conversions)?
- Many aspects of online planning and buying follow the general principles of traditional media.
 - Online ads can be bought to either generate reach or to reach a niche market....but the same can be said for the difference in buying primetime TV versus buying spots on a narrow cable network.
 - Advertiser can make great use of contextual placements on the Internet....much like a targeted vertical magazine buy.
 - Banner ads on the Internet are sold on a cost-per-thousand and they can be different sizes. Creatively, a lot can be done with Internet banners and different approaches work in different situations.
 - A consumer is more likely to notice an ad on the Internet – or hear it on the radio if they have a need for the product, if it is relevant to them.
- Offline media (traditional media) drives Search as does public relations efforts, newsworthy events, etc.
- Developing Keywords is a true specialty, as is Search Engine Optimization (SEO) for a client's web site so the company/organization comes up when a consumer is searching within a germane category.
- Furthermore, Landing pages are critical and should directly relate to the banner ad or search keyword. When creating an Internet (or any) advertising campaign, all components should work together, so the media and creative departments need to communicate early and often.
- Stay informed! Browse through, read, save pertinent e-letters and articles on everything from e-mail, banners and search to the even newer media like widgets, video and mobile.

The bottom line (at least for today, since media is always changing) is that media is as much a science as it is common sense – and that it is critical to keep up with the myriad of changes. At theAgency, we are very seasoned professionals who enjoy throwing ourselves into a client's business category while keeping up with our individual areas of expertise. Mine is media and it is with great excitement that I keep abreast of the continuing changes that affect your ability to reach your marketing objectives.

Once again, I invite you to email me at karen@agency2.com or give us a call to discuss this further!