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Developing an Effective Media Plan

At no time has the need for knowledgeable, professionally-trained media planners been greater. After all, costs for space and time have risen dramatically to the point that budgetary controls are more critical than ever. And how do you know you are reaching the right people when there are literally hundreds of television and radio stations, thousands of newspapers and magazines and a host of direct mail and outdoor advertising options from which to choose?

Because of this huge selection, today's media planners must have broader knowledge of marketing goals, advertising objectives, audience profiles and media characteristics...All with the goal of reaching the largest number of prospects at the lowest possible cost, and in an editorial or programming environment suitable for the particular product or service.

Things to consider

Target Audience Who are the present and potential prospects for the product or service? In recent years, media has been evaluated on its ability to maximize target-audience exposures. As a result, most agencies use some sort of weighted or demographic cost per thousand (CPM) to determine a medium's efficiency at reaching a specific audience.

Geography/Seasonality. Where is the product distributed? Where are the heaviest concentrations of prospects? Are there times of the year when sales are strongest? Answers to these questions help narrow media selection, determine the timing of a schedule and budget allocations per geographic area.

Creative Considerations. Are we effectively using the communicative strengths of the various media? Sometimes the very nature of the product may indicate the most appropriate media. Are demonstrations key to selling the product? Is a coupon involved? How much detail is necessary?

Reach/Frequency. There are often trade-offs that must be considered between reach and frequency. Is it more important to advertise to fewer people more often, or a broader base less frequently? Few budgets can stress both.

What about "interactive" media? This rapidly unfolding media realm is opening up a whole new world of opportunity (and challenge) for advertisers. We'd be happy to review the basics with you and explore how you can best prepare your organization for interactive messages.

Competition. Virtually every aspect of advertising is measured against the competition. Ad budgets typically take into account what competitors spend. Product success is measured in terms of market share. Often, in order to gain market share, you must be willing to outspend your competition. If that's not possible, the media planner must look for appropriate areas where the competition is weaker.

Remember, a good media plan systematically excludes non-prospects from the mix and includes methods for evaluating overall communications effectiveness. Since media usually represents the largest expenditure of an ad budget, it's no wonder advertisers are paying more attention to it.

Riger Media

Through years of experience with both media-savvy consumer clients and business-to-business advertisers, our agency has developed a level of sophistication comparable to that of the largest agencies in the business. Riger media has helped launch new products for national advertisers; buy space worldwide—in the Far East, Latin America, South America and Europe; and we've helped develop a system for insuring McDonald's Restaurants owner/operators of equitable media coverage...A methodology that was adopted system wide by McDonald's corporate media department for use by advertising agencies all over the country.

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