

CG CRAIN

THIRD EDITION

# Advertising Media Planning

Jack Z. Sissors  
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T H I R D   E D I T I O N

# Advertising Media Planning

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# Foreword

Few people are better qualified to author a definitive book on media planning and strategy than Jack Sissors. Jack and I first met when I was in charge of the media department at the Leo Burnett Company. The lure of academe pulled Jack away from a promising career. Leo Burnett's loss was Northwestern University's gain.

Jack's close association with practitioner colleagues has kept him current in the field of media planning. He created Northwestern University's annual "Media Symposium" for planners, and works on the Advertising Research Foundation's media research committees. In addition, he created and runs the *Journal of Media Planning*, a periodical written especially for media planners, which has made its mark in our business.

Jack's coauthor has a fine reputation at the Leo Burnett Company and in the media world, in general. He is Lincoln J. Bumba who is Senior Vice President and International Media Director at Burnett. Linc has worked in the media department for twenty-nine years, and brings to the book a wealth of media knowledge and experience acquired by working for sophisticated clients such as Procter and Gamble, Kellogg's, Pillsbury, McDonald's; and other leading marketers.

Sissors and Bumba have written the most comprehensive text I have seen on the complex world of modern media planning. Very few areas of the communications business have changed more in the past ten years than media, as mass media has given way to targeted media. Students and practitioners alike will find this book up to date; it leaves few, if any, questions unanswered. As media planning becomes more complex, the need to have a firm grasp on changing concepts and practices becomes more important than ever. This new edition is must reading for anyone who wants to understand the theory and practice of advertising media planning.

Leonard S. Matthews  
Former President of the Leo Burnett Company,  
and Past President of the American Association  
of Advertising Agencies

# Preface

This book is an introduction to the subject of planning media that are used to deliver advertising messages to consumers. The emphasis is on planning for consumer media—not buying or selling media, or planning other specialized media, such as those used in industrial advertising.

Planning for consumer media involves the selection and usage of media alternatives to achieve marketing as well as media goals. As a result, *Advertising Media Planning* has both a strong marketing and media foundation.

Originally, the text was written for college students majoring in advertising, but now it also has been written for professionals in the fields of advertising, marketing, and communication. As authors, our continuing goal is to explain media planning concepts and techniques as practiced by the leading media departments in American advertising agencies.

Emphasis is on media planning concepts, rather than on techniques or skills better learned on the job. Nevertheless, it is important to demonstrate how concepts are put into practice. We feel that unless readers know how concepts are implemented, their knowledge of the subject may be incomplete.

In this third edition, we have not only updated material from other editions, but have also added three new chapters (2, 4, and 6) that reflect the changing nature of media planning. We have included a basic discussion of “people meters” because they have become a widely used new tool for measuring television audiences. Other new measuring tools, such as “single source data,” market zip-code analysis, and the development of a passive people meter are also discussed.

The concept of effective frequency was first introduced in about 1973. Today, the concept itself has changed; for instance, there are new considerations that may determine how high frequency levels should be, and how these levels should be used. Chapter 6, in particular, addresses itself to these changes.

*Creative media planning*, an idea which comes into play after all the quantitative media evaluations are finished, is also discussed in this new edition. The complete media plan sample (Chapter 13) has been updated, arranged in an easier to understand format, and better explained.

All of these changes indicate that the practice of media planning is evolving and will continue to do so. Readers of this text should keep in mind that despite the fact that techniques change, basic media planning concepts have not changed very much. Therefore, the value of this book is closely tied to its explication of these basic concepts and is not diminished by changes in technique per se.

Finally we would like to thank the many media professionals who have contributed to the body of knowledge and thinking contained in these pages. We are deeply indebted to them.

Jack Z. Sissors  
Lincoln Bumba

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# 1

## An Introduction to Media Planning

### What Is a Medium?

The two most basic words in media planning are *medium* and *vehicle*. A *medium* is a carrier and deliverer of advertisements; media such as newspapers, magazines, radio, or television carry and deliver news, entertainment, and information to audiences. But they also deliver advertisements. The term *vehicle* generally is used to refer to a specific carrier within a media category—the *New York Times* is a vehicle within the newspaper medium—although some persons use the terms medium and vehicle interchangeably. Contemporary usage, however, seems to be settling on rather limited uses of the two terms:

Medium—a broad, general category of carriers such as newspapers, television, radio, magazines, direct mail, or outdoor

Vehicle—a specific single carrier within a medium, such as the *New York Times*, *Reader's Digest*, or a television program, such as the late news

### What Is Media Planning?

*Media planning* consists of the series of decisions made to answer the question for advertisers: “What are the best means of delivering advertisements to prospective purchasers of my brand or service?” (Advertisements are delivered by media such as newspapers, magazines, or television.) While this definition is rather general, it provides a broad picture of what media planning is all about.

Some specific questions that a media planner attempts to answer are:

- How many prospects (for purchasing a given brand of product) do I need to reach?
- In which medium should I place ads?

- How many times a month should prospects see each ad?
- In which months should ads appear?
- In which markets and regions of the United States should ads appear?
- How much money should be spent in each medium?

These are only a few of the questions that must be asked. Each one requires a specific answer and decision.

When all questions have been asked and decisions made, the recommendations and rationales are organized into a written document called a *media plan*. The plan, when approved by the advertiser, becomes a blueprint for the selection and use of media. Once the advertiser has approved the plan, it also serves as a guide for actually purchasing the media.

It would be a mistake, however, to think of media planning as nothing more than finding answers to a list of questions about media. Such a view is too narrow to provide the necessary perspective. Rather, it is better to assume that each question represents certain kinds of problems that need to be solved. Some problems are relatively simple, such as, "On which day of the week should television commercials be shown?" Other problems, however, are much more difficult, such as, "In which media will ads most affect the prospect's buying behavior to result in sales?"

Media planning should be thought of as a process or a series of decisions that provides the best possible answers to a set of problems. A planner may find that a solution to a given problem does not guarantee that it will work when other factors are considered. Finding the *best* solutions to a set of problems represents the main task of planners, and this is what makes media planning such an intellectually challenging activity.

## The Changing Role of Media Planners

The role of media planners has changed in advertising agencies. Today, media planning ranks in importance with marketing and creative planning, but in the early days of advertising agency operations media planning consisted of simple, clerical-type tasks. There were fewer media available in those days, and little research on media audiences had been done to guide planners in decision making.

Planning today is an executive function because it has become so much more complex and important than it was years ago. Today's planners must have a greater knowledge base from which to formulate media plans. The planners must not only know more about media, which have increased tremendously in number, but also know more about marketing, research, and advertising than did their predecessors. Most important, planners are called upon not only to make decisions, but to defend those decisions as the best that could be made after considering the many alternatives.

What brought about this change? Foremost was the rise of the marketing concept, which changed media planning from an isolated activity to one closely related to marketing planning. In fact, one way to evaluate a media plan is to measure how effectively it helps to attain marketing objectives. Another cause of the change was the development of new and more definitive media audience research techniques.

As a result, there are more research data available to help planners choose from among a myriad of alternatives.

The change was also due to the increase in advertising expenditures by companies with smaller profit ratios to selling expenses. Quite simply, companies of all sizes now spend many more dollars for media. Also, the prices for purchasing ads in the various media have accelerated rapidly—media are very expensive to buy. As a consequence, company managements want better proof than ever before that their money is well spent. The media planner is the one who is responsible for providing detailed and valid explanations for the media decisions.

Media planning, then, is not so much a matter of being able to answer such relatively simple questions as where to place advertisements or how many advertisements to run each week, as it is a matter of proving that optimal decisions were made under a given set of marketing circumstances. Advertisers demand such explanations, and media planners must be able to provide them. Today's media planners have changed as requirements for planning have changed. The new planner must have breadth of knowledge, marketing understanding, research familiarity, creative planning awareness, and media acumen to do the job competently. It is within this framework that media planning now takes place.

## Changes in the Media Planning Industry

Not only have media planners changed, but so has the media environment in which the planner works. One major change has been the creation of new media. Another change is the development of new kinds of audience measurement tools. Still another is new concepts of measuring audiences. The following is a quick overview of these exciting changes. More details about them will be found in Chapters 3 and 6.

**New Media.** Almost everyone has heard about cable television. Cable offers advertisers new opportunities for reaching more and different kinds of consumers. But other new media such as videotex (or two-way television) may allow media planners to use media in ways never before possible, such as to allow audience members to buy football or concert tickets, to do banking, to buy clothes and gifts, all without leaving home. Video cassettes and other new media offer many different kinds of planning opportunities.

**People Meters.** At least three companies have competed for the approval of media planners in measuring who watches what on television. Electronic measurements of viewers, it is hoped, will not only replace diaries that only indicate which TV programs are “tuned in,” but will also tell planners which people are watching. And some people meters may be coordinated with product purchasing measurements (single source data) to provide a correlation between television watching and purchasing. The three main companies were A. C. Nielsen, through its Media Research Group (MRG); AGB Research (Audits of Great Britain); and Arbitron's Scan America. At present, only A. C. Nielsen measures audiences with people meters.

**New Methods of Proving Advertising's Effects on Sales.** A number of companies are measuring what consumers purchase through use of UPC scanners. One company will have members of a consumer panel show identification cards when they check out their purchases, and the data will be combined into a sample that shows which brands are being purchased, which sizes, and, it is hoped, which commercials and/or promotions affected purchases. This data can be correlated with television watching from the same sample. The A. C. Nielsen Company calls its service ERIM (Electronic Research for Insights into Marketing). Another company, IRI (Information Resources, Inc.), calls its technique Behaviorscan.

## Classes of Media

### Mass Media

Mass media, such as newspapers, magazines, radio, and television are especially well suited for delivering advertisements—as well as news, entertainment, and educational material—to a widespread general audience. (See Figure 1–1.) Planners find mass media valuable because (1) such media may be able to deliver large audiences at relatively low costs, (2) they can deliver advertisements to special kinds of audiences who are attracted to each medium's editorial or programming, and (3) they tend to develop strong loyalties among audiences who return to their favorite medium with a high degree of regularity. If a planner wants to reach a special kind of audience repeatedly within a certain time period, some media vehicles will be better suited for this purpose than others. Recent research suggests, for example, that certain types of broadcast programs create higher degrees of viewer interest than other program types, thus offering better environments for commercials.

Media planners, however, also know that mass media (like other media) have their limitations in delivering advertising messages. The most serious is that mass media audiences do not see, hear, or read a medium solely because of the advertising content. Media vary in their ability to get both editorial and advertising material exposed.

Newspapers have news, entertainment, information, and catalog values for their readers. A newspaper generally has excellent readership of both editorial and advertising material, serving as a buying guide for readers who are looking for many different kinds of products. Housewives, for example, often check newspaper ads immediately before their regular food shopping day to find the best grocery bargains. For frequently purchased products, where prices are prominently displayed, newspapers can be a very effective selling medium.

Magazines, on the other hand, are much different in their ability to get ads read. Although some people buy a magazine because they are looking for specific product information on a car or a piece of furniture, most magazine readers are looking for interesting editorial material rather than product information.

Broadcast media, such as radio and television, and the new media are least sought out by consumers for the advertisements alone. Broadcast commercials have

**FIGURE 1-1. Media Most Often Used for Advertising**

There are many options open for delivering advertising messages to potential buyers. Some of these media have been widely used for many years, such as "Traditional Media." Others however, either are very specialized, or are so new that they have not been widely used, but are being considered.

**Traditional Media****Print media**

- Newspapers
- Magazines
- Supplements (newspaper distributed magazines)
- Shoppers (local newspapers carrying mostly ads)
- Direct mail
- Handbills
- Freestanding inserts (FSI) in newspapers and magazines

**Broadcast media**

- Television programs (network or local)
- Spot television (commercials placed between programs or in local programs)
- Radio programs (network or local)
- Spot radio (commercials placed between programs or in local programs)

**Other**

- Outdoor (printed, painted)
- Car cards and smaller posters

**Specialized Media**

- Yellow pages of phone books
- Business publications (including professional journals)
- Directories and membership listings
- Event programs (including concert, theater, and sporting programs)
- Handbills 传单
- Catalogs 目录

**The New Media \***

Some of these media are already being used by advertisers (such as cable), but others are still being evaluated for the future (such as pay cable, VCRs, etc.).

- Cable (basic)
- Pay cable (or pay for view) not accepting advertising as of now
- Videotape players and video discs (cassettes)/recorders (VCRs)
- Videotex/teletext and Qube (these are interactive media where audiences can respond to messages)
- Personal computers
- Multipoint Distribution System (MDS; an over-the-air signal delivery system sending programs from a closed-circuit microwave transmitter to an empty TV channel)
- Direct Broadcast Satellites (DBS; signals sent from satellites directly to homes that have a receiving dish-earth station; uses a scrambled signal that must be unscrambled with a decoder)
- Subscription TV (STV; a scrambled signal is broadcast from a UHF TV station to a home that has an unscrambler decoder)
- Low power TV (LPTV; stations whose signal covers about 10 to 20 miles)
- Picturephones (telephones that show pictures of persons making calls)
- Satellite-Fed Master Antenna TV (SMATV; a minicable system for large buildings that picks up signals from a satellite and transmits them to individual apartments)

\*Kaatz, Ronald B., *Cable Advertiser's Handbook*, Lincolnwood, Illinois. National Textbook Co., 1985, p. 32.

an intrusive character, breaking into the play or action of a program and compelling some attention to the advertising message. Whether any given viewer will or will not watch a particular commercial is determined more by the ingenuity and value of the message than by its appearance on an interesting program. Videotex, teletext, and Qube could be the exceptions. Audiences could seek them out for making buying decisions, and complete the sale via the media.

The effectiveness of the commercial or advertisement to communicate obviously affects the impact it will have on the consumer, and the number of consumers who will read, see, or hear it. This is true regardless of which medium is used.

## Specialized Media

Special interest consumer magazines appeal to specific reader interests such as skiing, money management, photography, or antiques. These magazines are read as much for their advertising as they are for their editorial content. Therefore, these magazines often attract readers who purchase the magazine not only for the editorial material, but also for information on the kinds of products advertised.

A large category of media also exists to meet the specialized needs of industrial manufacturers, service companies, wholesalers, retailers, and professional workers such as physicians, attorneys, and teachers. These media may take the form of publications that contain editorial matter, as well as advertising, pertaining to the specialized market, but they may also include films, trade shows, convention exhibits, and phonograph records.

Other specialized media exist exclusively for the purpose of delivering advertising messages. They carry no editorial matter and are not sought after by readers as are other forms of media. Such advertising-oriented media include handbills, direct mail, outdoor billboards, car cards that appear on buses or trucks, and free-standing inserts in newspapers (called FSI).

Another special medium is the catalog. Although catalogs are often requested by consumers, they may not be looked at with the same degree of frequency as are mass media. Therefore, the advertising value of catalogs is somewhat limited. A special form of catalog is the telephone book, which carries advertising but also carries editorial matter—telephone numbers. Plumbers, for example, might justifiably use telephone book advertising exclusively because plumbers aren't needed until emergencies arise. On such occasions, the consumer will search ads in the Yellow Pages to find a plumber, but probably will not notice such ads at any other time.

## General Procedures in Planning Media

Marketing considerations must precede media planning. Media planning never starts with answers to such questions as "Which medium should I select?" or "Should I use television or magazines?" Planning grows out of a marketing problem that needs to be solved. To start without knowing or understanding the underlying marketing problem is illogical, because the use of media is primarily a tool for



implementing the marketing strategy. So the starting point for a media plan should be an analysis of a marketing situation. This analysis is made so that both marketing and media planners can get a bird's-eye view of how a company has been operating against its competitors in the total market. The analysis serves as a means of learning what the details of the problem are, where possibilities lie for its solution, and where the company can gain an advantage over its competitors in the marketplace.

After the marketing situation has been analyzed, a *marketing strategy and plan* is devised that states marketing objectives and spells out the actions to accomplish those objectives. When the marketing strategy calls for advertising, it is usually to communicate some information to consumers that affects the attainment of a marketing objective. Media are the means whereby advertisements are delivered to the market.

Once a marketing plan has been devised, an *advertising creative strategy* must also be determined. This consists of decisions about what is to be communicated, how it will be executed, and what it is supposed to accomplish. A statement of advertising copy themes and how copy will be used to communicate the selling message is also part of that strategy. Media planning decisions are affected by advertising creative strategy because some creative strategies are better suited to one medium than to any other. For example, if a product requires demonstration, television may be the best medium. If an ad must be shown in high-fidelity color, magazines or newspaper supplements may be preferable. Creative strategy also determines the prospect profile in terms of such demographic variables as age, sex, income, or occupation. These prospects now become the targets that the planner will focus on in selecting media vehicles.

It should be noted that up to this point persons other than the media planner have been making decisions that will ultimately affect the media plan. The marketing or marketing research people were responsible for the situation analysis and marketing plan, though media planners are, at times, involved at the inception of the marketing plan. Copywriters and art directors are generally responsible for carrying out the creative strategy. Sometimes a marketing plan may be as simple as a memorandum from a marketing executive to the media planner, or even an idea in an advertising executive's mind. In such informal situations, media planning may begin almost immediately with little or no marketing research preceding it. Figure 1-2 summarizes the preplanning steps.

The media planner begins work once a marketing strategy plan is in hand. This plan sets the tone and guides the direction of the media decisions to follow.

The first thing to come out of such a plan is a statement of *media objectives*. These are the goals that a media planner believes are most important in helping to attain marketing objectives. Goals include determination of which *targets*—those persons most likely to purchase a given product or service—are most important, how many of those targets need to be reached, and where advertising should be concentrated at what times.

*Media strategies* develop out of objectives. A media strategy is a series of actions selected from several possible alternatives to best achieve the media objectives. Media strategies will cover such decisions as which kinds of media should be used, whether national or spot broadcast advertising should be used, how ads should be scheduled, and many other decisions.