BRAND MEDIA STRATEGY

INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING IN THE DIGITAL ERA // ANTONY YOUNG

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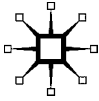
BRAND MEDIA STRATEGY

INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING IN THE DIGITAL ERA

SECOND EDITION

ANTONY YOUNG

palgrave
macmillan

BRAND MEDIA STRATEGY

This book is dedicated to all the like-minded people who
believe that media is a powerful driver of marketing

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FOREWORD

Nearly a decade ago, I started covering the digital media world as a reporter at *Advertising Age.* Digital was, in my very biased opinion, the most interesting part of the marketing world. Not only was it introducing new types of marketing tools (search advertising, behavioral targeting) but it was also having a dramatic effect on the ways in which consumers behave. I think back to my own behavior back then—and how different it is today—as I instantly buy and download books on my iPad, read the *New York Times* on my phone, and stream movies and television shows to my big screen. Simply put: I get my media when I want it and where I want it.

Some people look at the current situation and think only of the difficulty it's added to the business of marketing. And don't get me wrong, these shifts do present challenges. Consumers have been freed from the linear schedules of traditional media (ad breaks included) and boast a number of mechanisms to talk directly to brands and to each other *about* brands. Meanwhile, thanks to an explosion of content sources and communications tools, there's greater competition than ever for consumer attention.

In another camp are people who look at this changing world and see incredible opportunity. Opportunities to make more meaningful connections with consumers by not talking to them but with them and by enabling the conversations they have with each other. Opportunities to be more relevant by understanding context and connections. Opportunities to create more accountable and effective communications by continually learning, honing, and refining messages in response to near-instant feedback and data. Indeed it's a whole new world of opportunity in which there appear to be few limits on how brands can connect with consumers.

Antony Young falls into the latter camp.

I met Antony Young several years ago when he started as a columnist for *Ad Age.* At the time, he was the US chief executive officer of Publicis Groupe's Optimedia, and he impressed me not only with his global perspective, having run both the UK and Asia operations before finding himself in New York, but also with his respect for and excitement about what the digital transformation was doing to business. While many leaders in the advertising space seemed to want to turn back time to the analog past, Antony was looking forward and helping lead some of the world's largest brands, including Procter & Gamble and Toyota, into the communications future. He has maintained that mindset in the time since, at WPP's Mindshare and, now, at his current venture, the Water Cooler Group.

In 2010, he parlayed his knowledge of the media transformation, communications planning, and the business needs of marketers into *Brand Media Strategy,* a useful guide for marketing practitioners who are navigating this changing world.

While my purview today is broader than it was when I was a digital-media reporter, I still think the digital transformation is the most exciting story in the marketing space—and in the greater business world. In fact, these days I often say that at *Advertising Age* everyone is a digital reporter because we're not just covering digital marketing, but marketing in a digital world.

And that's the context for *Brand Media Strategy,* too.

This book is a guide to crafting an integrated communications plan for today's era—an era that continues to change. Antony has smartly updated this second edition to include more information on social, which is proving to be an increasingly important tool for insight gathering as well as message dissemination, and data, which has become a driver of effectiveness, accountability and, yes, even creativity.

Abbey Klaassen
Associate Publisher, Editorial & Audience
Advertising Age
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INTRODUCTION

I n the first decade of the new millennium, a digital revolution swept into the midtown headquarters of New York's media moguls and snapped all the golden rules. Upending business models and the role of mass media itself, that revolution has also engulfed Madison Avenue. The ongoing turmoil brought with it an invigorating tumult of fresh ideas, inspiration, and innovation in the marketing and promotion of brands.

Brand Media Strategy is a play book to help guide the reader in a world where few rules remain. It sets out to help marketing and ad executives exploit media to amplify and promote their brands. This book offers strategies that tap into the ever-changing digitally enhanced media communications age.

During the last decade, two companies in particular, Google and Facebook, have altered the face of mass marketing. In late 2000, Google unleashed a product called AdWords that handed marketers the ability to capture consumers much further down the purchase funnel. With AdWords, marketers could bypass traditional mass media strategies (in television, radio, and print) and directly target people searching for details of a specific service or product. It gave the marketer unprecedented visibility and accountability into advertising as a medium.

Just three years later, Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg and some friends from Harvard University created a force in personal communication responsible for launching social media into the mainstream. Love it or loathe it, Facebook has changed our lives, the way we connect with people, and even our shopping habits. In 2012, the social networking site surpassed a billion users, and has spurred scores of other successful social

media networks and reshaped how we think about addressing digital communities. Facebook also created a system for disseminating brand preferences that zap back and forth between friends and acquaintances from New York to Nepal. Who ever thought of declaring they were a "fan of Nutella" to their network of friends before Facebook arrived? Facebook's most significant impact on media planning can be summed up with the most persuasive phrase in marketing: word of mouth.

These two ventures have been followed by others, but the power and precedence of Google and Facebook are unrivaled and have shaken the advertising and media professions to their core, forcing a reappraisal of how brands employ media to promote themselves. Marketers and their agencies are scrambling to adapt existing skills and reinvent new ones to take advantage of these major shifts. Digital expertise has moved to the center of planning. It is no longer the icing on the cake.

This book is not about digital media itself, but about its impact. Marketing is now as focused on microtargeting as it is on mass media, on response as it is on branding, on earned media as it is on paid media. The lines have blurred across all traditional borders. Google and its band of Silicon Valley engineers, and those Facebook classmates, have crashed the party and changed the media ecology.

Yet over 80 percent of advertising is still invested in the so-called traditional media channels. The owners of television, radio, out-of-home, and print media aren't taking all this change lying down. They are evolving as technology plays a more prominent role in expanding how consumers access media content, not just from television or print, but from gaming devices, smartphones, tablets, and wearable devices.

Think about how digital video sites such as Hulu have given marketers the ability to craft campaigns that cross from television to PC to mobile and reach viewers wherever they consume media products. Think about how a tweet, a Facebook message, and an email from an unknown Illinois senator affected the outcome of an American presidential election.

The rules of engagement have changed. Digital and data have formed powerful bedfellows. And this has been transformational for marketers. The conventions of media planning and buying are being overhauled, and the bar for measuring effectiveness is much higher than before.

The most progressive marketers tap into new media platforms as well as leverage new ways of dealing with existing channels to win in the marketplace. This book will give you the road map and the compass to develop strategies that work for brands big and small.

A variety of titles already offers instruction and guidelines for advertising, media planning, branding, and digital marketing. This book is different. It is for the planner who wants to navigate the new media landscape to develop a Brand Media Strategy through communications planning.

Brand Media Strategy shares dozens of case studies that delve deep into planning approaches, including an in-depth discussion of how President Barack Obama used big data and micro-targeting to win reelection in 2012. We illustrate how American Express created a movement for shoppers to support small businesses through Facebook. We reveal what went into Denny's television and online campaign that got two million people into their restaurants in a single day. And we share some of the strategic thinking behind Unilever's integrated communication programs for Dove and Axe.

Brand Media Strategy shows you how brands navigate today's media setting by being more calculated and creative. Finally, it provides both marketer and agency the resources to help teams move beyond tactics to craft strategies that ensure brand media communication drives the desire for top-line growth.

Above all, this book is about using media to amplify and build brands with consumers.

WHY WRITE THIS BOOK?

I've written this book with three main ideas in mind. First, *Brand Media Strategy* deals with the important area of communications planning. Rather than being about how each individual medium is planned, it is about how to develop a strategic and holistic plan that drives brand marketing across media . This book complements existing branding, digital, and media planning titles.

Brand Media Strategy focuses on what works and what doesn't, and how to make effectiveness central to marketers' media programs. It tackles

how to embrace all media touch points, from the traditional to the experiential, digital, and word of mouth. It also provides a framework and tools for planning these strategies. This book explores methods for agencies and brands to connect communications planning to the creative process.

Second, this book is based on what the media looks like today. It deals with a media world where digital is at the center; social as a key enabler; and the increasing value of data in powering more commercial media strategies. It is not an updated edition of an established best media practices title that has sought to add in digital. I look at how the best brands are using media today to be more effective in this more accountable, interactive world.

The latest developments in media, notably in the digital space, have redefined the media landscape and reinvented established advertising practices. This book is not intended to be a history lesson; it is a snapshot of today's ever-changing media world and a manual for how brands can best engage with it. It is filled with dozens of very current cases.

This book strongly advocates that digital cannot be a separate function or an adjunct to communications planning. It is in fact one of the most powerful channels and levers for brand communications, one that is integral and often central to *every* media campaign.

I wrote this books first edition in the midst of the harshest recession since the Great Depression. Accountability and effectiveness became front and center as never before and have since provided a much-needed lens to all brand marketing communications to follow.

Lastly, I've written this book to assist people who are responsible for developing Brand Media Strategies. If you are an agency planner, digital practitioner, or media buyer, you have witnessed some incredible changes in your craft. You're constantly challenged to question established practices, go into new places, and be a pioneer in communications. Media's role has stretched beyond its traditional boundaries. There are many more options and new technologies to consider. You are in one of the most exciting industries I know of, and staying on top of it as it changes and learning new skills are two of the toughest but most essential parts of your job.

Since the first edition was published, I became aware that *Brand Media Strategy* has become required reading or a resource for a number of

colleges and post-graduate degree courses. That excites me to know that many of you are contemplating a career in media. I would never in a hundred years consider myself an academic. I wrote this book as a business tool for people in the media business to be better at their jobs. All I can say is that the learning in media and marketing is an ongoing task.

This book is also for those in brand and media management, the people responsible for allocating and managing marketing communication budgets. You don't have to know the ins and outs of media planning and buying, but it's important for you to own the strategy. Media represents an important part of the marketing mix. Ultimately, you are accountable for your decisions, not the agency. This book helps you direct and manage your agency's output. What's changed for the second edition?

Media is always in a state of constant change, and in some cases the book did need some updating. For instance, since I wrote the first edition, Facebook's added half a billion users! And at that time, iPads and hence the tablet market were only six months old. But rereading this book, I'm surprised how much has stood the test of time.

I've added two entirely new chapters. First, chapter 10, which I've dedicated entirely to Social. The social media landscape has evolved considerably since 2010. Players such as Pinterest, Instagram, Vine, GroupOn, and Buzzfeed have opened up new categories in the space. Many have launched and many others have since subsided or reinvented themselves. As a marketing channel, brands have shifted from using social media in a tactical or ad-hoc manner to, in some cases, employing Social as the core driver of their broader marketing strategy. I put a case to why Social has become one of the most important skill-sets a communications planner should possess.

Second, chapter 13 offers a window into big data and data planning, which has the potential to launch a new paradigm in marketing and media and be the most important development of the past decade.

I've also updated some case studies I hope better illustrate some of the principles behind Brand Media Strategy. Thanks for buying this book. I'm sure it will provide excellent ROI in your understanding and the job of media marketing.

GOOGLE AND FACEBOOK

HOW THEY'RE CHANGING THE GAME

G oogle and Facebook and a host of other digital media have disrupted the marketing communications profession. The two companies, each in its own unique way, have changed the game. While it is tempting to dismiss popular digital fads, the impact of Google and Facebook goes way beyond their respective numbers of visitors or valuations. They have reshaped mass communications globally and opened up opportunities for marketers to execute more accountable, influential, and multidimensional campaigns.

Branding has been the foundation of the advertising industry for a century. Broadcast and print advertising's forte was in growing brand awareness and building brands. In some respects, digital media has set higher standards, in effect repositioning the industry's perspective of established media, because digital media enables consumer response measurement. Tracking and optimization tools for digital media provide granular and near real-time response to creative messaging, which allows not just a higher degree of accountability but more sophistication in influencing buyer behavior.

Digital media also provides a level of interactivity that by its very nature enables a more personalized experience. Users are able to get information how and when they want it. The Internet has become the information

medium of choice and a significant factor in influencing purchase decisions. For marketers, digital media provides insight into how to reach customers and convert interest into intent to purchase.

The peer-to-peer connectivity of social media needs to become central to every marketer's thinking. We are taking product recommendations from strangers, brand likes from friends on Facebook, or seeing our search results on Google influenced by the social media activity of people we are connected to. Marketers are adjusting for these trends. According to a 2013 survey by Dimensional Research, two-thirds of people read product reviews online, and of those, 90 percent say it influenced their shopping.[1]

Knowing the digital media space is vital to getting the most out of advertising. Let's take a brief look at the two companies.

GOOGLE: THE MAGIC, THE LOGIC

For decades, advertising has been about creativity, art, and emotional connections. And then came Google, bringing with it an advertising era based on math, reason, and logic. Google offered to solve the age-old conundrums of marketers: waste and accountability. What marketer wouldn't want solutions to both?

Google helped advertisers by providing the ability to directly target consumers at the moment they're looking for a product or service. Google serves up an ad on its search site and elsewhere at the precise point in time that people are researching a potential purchase or, even better, are ready to buy online. Quite simply, Google's AdWords program has revolutionized the way companies big and small advertise.

Google's ability to serve as a conduit for sellers looking for customers has created billions of dollars in profitability, and few think Google's potential is anywhere near fulfilled, such is its lock on our collective consciousness. "Google and its competitors have created the first application to leverage the database of intentions in a commercial manner: paid search," writes John Battelle in *The Search: How Google and Its Rivals Rewrote the Rules of Business and Transformed Our Culture.*[2] Battelle came up with the phrase "the database of intentions" to convey the power Google holds in knowing what we're all searching for, whether it's boots, books,

doctors, or divorces. Google's advantage comes in matching advertisers to all those searches for information. What ads web users see depends on a variety of factors, but the most important one is the ads' relevance to the initial search phrase. "It is a very efficient marketing program," says former Gateway online strategist Antonella Pisani. "You are capturing people while they are interested."[3]

For an example of AdWords' effectiveness, take Paul Bond Boots, an Arizona-based family-owned business that sells cowboy boots. When asked "How good of a program is Google AdWords for small business?" one of the company executives said, "In my opinion it would be indispensable at a time like this."[4] The company's ad showed up on the right in the sponsored links section when "cowboy boots" was typed in the search box. But Google AdWords isn't a media sales tool for just the Paul Bonds of this world. Fortune 100 companies such as CitiGroup, IBM, and even Google competitor Microsoft rely on Google's utility and targetability for their commercial success. It's hard to imagine Amazon as the company it is today without Google AdWords.

The change that Google has brought on advertising cannot be overstated. It forced a paradigm shift for advertisers, moving their decision-making away from targeting demographics and mass audiences to connecting with individuals in a much more relevant way. As a result, marketers have seen wastage significantly reduced. Since AdWords' cost is based on an auction model connected to the price and effectiveness of the advertising, the onus is on the advertiser to develop more effective copy. Google's brilliance is that advertisers can see whether a coupon or a free recipe is more effective. And even better, advertisers can adjust their plan almost instantaneously without significant additional costs, in contrast to making ad changes in traditional media, which is slow and expensive.

Advertisers can't buy their way to the top—the ads have to be relevant to the people typing the search term, and Google ranks the site they are directed to by its quality. And that is a critical point for a marketing strategy—how well do you know customers and how well are you targeting them with the message *they* want to hear? How much marketers pay for their ads to be clicked on is decided by factors that Google—not the advertiser—controls. Yet Google has democratized advertising, making it

accessible to small advertisers and taking away the clout and scale enjoyed by bigger fish.

Ken Auletta in his book *Googled: The End of the World as We Know It* observed that Google believes it is helping shape a new and better media world by making the buying of advertising more accountable and transparent. In Google's view, the company serves consumers by offering advertising as information. And by offering a bidding system based on rewarding the more responsive ads, it is helping improve advertising performance.[5]

Google's largest impact on the media business as a whole has been to force it to compare its conventional metrics with sophisticated Internet data. In an attempt to stem the flow of dollars to more accountable media, television networks agreed to move from program ratings—the currency of the industry since television ad buying began—to commercial break ratings, which made it possible to estimate how many people were viewing a particular commercial. Newspaper executives only provide circulation figures; whereas, digital advertisers know exactly who's reading what story, when, and often where.

What's more, consumers' appetite for search continues to grow. In 2012, Google saw just over five billion searches a day, double the number just three years earlier.[6]

Google has highlighted the undeniable fact that the established advertising business was built around a soft measurement—say, ratings or readers or impressions. The increased transparency of digital advertising's direct impact on sales and leads is pushing other media to do better. Our clients will no longer accept "estimated measures" of success when digital media provides them with hard data that can be tied directly to results.

Google ran a print ad targeted to the advertising community that (Figure 1.1), explains in very simple terms four ways the company can help marketers. In many ways that copy reflects this new era of advertising accountability that Google champions.

Google's business has expanded to include many multiple businesses from its venture into mobile with its Android operating system, to

FIGURE 1.1

4 ways our logic can help you work your magic.

1. KNOW WHAT YOU DON'T KNOW

Knowing trumps guessing every time. Use our free tools to know what consumers are talking about, looking for, engaging with, and visiting. Take our Insights for Search tool. You can discover regional search patterns and trends, then take advantage of them by adapting your messages in key markets. Instead of best guesses, you've now got an informed strategy.
Also consider: Google Ad Planner, Google Analytics, Google Alerts

2. AMPLIFY YOUR CREATIVITY

If your creativity knows no bounds, neither should your creative. Use our digital tools to explore possibilities and breathe more life into your campaigns. Take DoubleClick Studio. You can create captivating, interactive rich media ads using simple, drag-and-drop, pre-made components. Your inspiration now has a lot more opportunity to inspire.
Also consider: iGoogle Gadgets, YouTube InVideo ads, Ad Creation Marketplace for Google TV Ads

3. BUY MEDIA THAT MATTERS

Spellbinding creative will fall flat if your message never connects. Use our advertising solutions to reach the right customers. Yours. Take Placement Targeting on the Google Content Network. You can zero in on your audience by easily selecting specific ad placements—entire sites, sections of sites, or even particular spots on particular pages. You've now created meaningful connections, and are paying only what they're worth to you.
Also consider: Search, display, TV, and mobile advertising, all via Google AdWords

4. GET RESULTS, THEN GET BETTER RESULTS

As you work your magic, you'll want to know how well it's working. Use our free reporting and optimization tools to learn what's working, what's not, and what'll work better. Take Custom Reports in Google Analytics. You can quickly create tailored views of the website metrics, making it easy to review and act on the information important to you. With all of these tricks up your sleeve, now you're ready to go make more magic. Logically.
Also consider: AdWords Report Center, Website Optimizer, YouTube Insight

Visit www.google.com/advertisers to learn how these and other Google solutions can help you work your magic.

Google

YouTube as the number one video site, to its own social media channel in Google+, and its AdSense display advertising business, and many other ventures, experiments, and acquisitions. There's no question of AdWords continued importance to the marketing community, as well as to Google Inc.'s business.

FACEBOOK'S INFLUENCE OF A BILLION PLUS FRIENDS

The number of social media sites is exploding, and usage is up in almost every dimension—as good a reason as any for marketers to take note.

Launched by Mark Zuckerberg in 2004 from his Harvard University dorm, Facebook began life as a site to help fellow students share videos and messages rather than emailing them or uploading them to clunky sites. Facebook's simple interface, rather like Google's simple home page, is one reason its popularity leapfrogged other earlier sites such as MySpace and Friendster.

Its number of users exceeded a billion in the summer of 2012. But it is its utility that has led to its becoming so influential. According to Facebook, half of all users access the site each day, and on average they spend 8.3 hours on the site each month. It remains the largest site where photos are shared. In addition, some 7.5 million websites have a Facebook share button on them.[7]

Its impact on world events has been huge. Suddenly the power of word of mouth, networks, and small groups has become magnified globally.

When a new disaster strikes in the world, social media sites, such as Facebook and Twitter, are increasingly the places that people turn to first to find out what happened from friends or witnesses who are reporting before the news media. The Arab Spring rising in Egypt in 2011 saw Facebook play a role in mobilizing communities, as did the managing of relief efforts for Haiti. The New York-based *Haitian Times* wrote that "the use of social networks as a major way of communications is a first for Haitians, who have traditionally relied on radio and word of mouth as the best source of information."[8]

David Kirkpatrick writes that Zuckerberg and others at Facebook "believe [that] more visibility makes us better people. Some claim, for example, that because of Facebook, young people today have a harder time cheating on their boyfriends or girlfriends. They also say that more transparency should make for a more tolerant society in which people eventually accept that everybody sometimes does bad or embarrassing things."[9] This idea has migrated to brands and how people respond positively to the transparency that social media encourages. In a world where consumers

are becoming more cynical and dismissive of corporate-controlled brand messaging, Facebook represents the media of the everyday person. Hence marketers and their agencies are trying to tap into the Facebook effect. They're trying to create Facebook brands that are built out from within the Facebook community and are thus personally relevant in this more transparent and authentic world.

Marketers are able to access more intimate opportunities to engage consumers through Facebook and other social media networks:

- They provide a rich data mine of people's current interests, for example, a book or movie. It's a global focus group.
- They enable marketers to see what's working and what's not and put more money behind those products and services that gaining the most positive mentions (see the Coca-Cola brand page on www.facebook.com/cocacola).
- Social media sites are portable and can be accessed from a smartphone, enabling marketers to connect 24/7 and also serve up messages based on the viewer's location.
- "Like" pages allow users to tell their friends of their support for certain brands.
- Facebook gives advertisers the ability to target using person-alized data; Facebook users share their geography, birthday, gender, relationship status, age, and education level.
- The early Internet advertising strategy of driving traffic to a corporate site has been superseded by the strategy of brands living on sites that users enjoy spending time on.

Brands have mirrored their consumers on Facebook. "Companies cannot traverse the web quick enough. They need to create these unpaid armies of customers to do this on their behalf," claims Jeremiah Owyang, a partner with Altimeter Group.[10]

One of the most popular brand sites is Coca-Cola's, initially built not by the company but by true brand evangelists. The carbonated soft drink brand's fans post their love of the drink alongside photos of their Coke merchandise collections. It has become one of the most successful brand

stories on Facebook. In early 2014, it had acquired over seventy-eight million likes, not by promoting products but by posting status updates and photos that encourage engagement, support, and social interaction with events and causes. This included acknowledgments of Nelson Mandela's passing or the celebration of Labor Day. As social media continues to evolve, new sites and platforms will arise and be the first to catch the next wave. But Google and Facebook are the first significant players to have broken through and influenced everyone in our business. It won't ever be the same.

THE NEW MEDIA PLAYBOOK

A NEW SET OF RULES FOR
A NEW MEDIA WORLD

I remember as a kid growing up, discarding my Larry Bird Converse sneakers for the latest pair of Nikes. I really did think they made me jump higher and shoot the basketball better. I would later learn when I entered the ad business that it was all about branding.

Nike is one brand that has wisely used its marketing to remain relevant. It has transformed its Brand Media Strategy from the golden age of mass advertising to one that takes full advantage of the Google and Facebook era.

Back in the eighties and nineties, Nike's ad campaigns were the gold standard of the marketing community. Michael Jordan was the face of the brand for youngsters, whether they lived in an inner city or a leafy suburb.

The sneaker brand aired its first national television spot in 1982. By 1988 Nike launched that unforgettable tagline "Just do it," which became an *Advertising Age* top-five slogan of the twentieth century. The marketing helped propel the company to a 23 percent share of the athletic shoe market.[1]

Fast-forward 25 years and Nike's strategy looks very different. Today, Nike spend just a third of budget in traditional media.[2] Now, Nike shows many of its ad spots only on the Internet. A two-minute, forty-six-second

spot starring soccer player Ronaldinho garnered 28 million views on YouTube.[3]

The Nike vice president and GM of North America, Joaquin Hidalgo, espouses this approach, commenting, "Consumers don't want to be told what's cool. People don't want more products, they want more experiences. . . . Now we put consumers smack dab in the middle of everything we do. Placing them in the center and engaging with them is what we like to do. Our consumer is growing up in a different world. One big thing changing in their world is the notion that they are digitally enabled and connected."[4]

For that approach, Nike realized that advertising wouldn't be enough, and the firm began to develop "experiences." The company created an online community for runners when it offered them its Nike+ sensor. The sensor records a runner's activity on an Apple iPod. Runners upload their workout activity to a website and read web logs written by coaches.

Separately, the athletic apparel giant arranged for five coaches and seventeen pacers to lead runs through Central Park three times a week starting from one of Nike's stores in Manhattan. Nike organized the Human Race, a 10K running event in 25 cities with 800,000 participants.

There is no question that what Chris Anderson dubbed the long tail of media (all the small outlets that target tiny audiences that, when put together, represent a targeted mass) presents tremendous opportunities to a savvy marketer.[5] Nike proved this by using the tail to outmaneuver its rival Adidas during the 2010 soccer World Cup: Leading into the tournament, Nike launched a three-minute video ad called "Write the Future" on its Facebook page. The spot featured famous footballers such as England's Wayne Rooney and Portugal's Cristiano Ronaldo. Fans were encouraged via an online tool to edit the spot. These edited versions competed for votes.

Five weeks after its debut, the online spot had been viewed by over twenty million people. Nike enjoyed twice as much buzz associated with the World Cup than official sponsor Adidas.[6]

Nike has evolved its marketing along with the times. For their 2012 Olympic campaign they chose not to showcase Olympic athletes; instead, they looked to make the brand more accessible, featuring 12-year-old

Nathan jogging down a long road, encouraging everyone to find their greatness. "Find Your Greatness" employed social and digital communities to drive the campaign, tapping into Nike+ fuel—an app to encourage everyone to participate by monitoring, recording, and sharing their daily activity. They showed how employing social media channels could create consumer engagement for their brand.

Stefan Olander, vice president and general manager of Nike Digital Sport, says, "We want to find a way to enhance the experience and services, rather than looking for a way to interrupt people from getting to where they want to go."[7] Nike's products continue to be in demand, and it remains the world's number-one seller of athletic footwear and apparel.

THE MEDIA WORLD IS EVOLVING FAST

The media business has always shaped how advertising has evolved. The two businesses are intertwined like no others. They feed each other, they support each other, and they innovate together. Newspaper publishers created the ad industry, radio aired sponsored programs in its early days, and television fueled brand advertising in its golden years. The eighties saw the growth of cable television and the targeting of the MTV generation, while the late nineties ushered in the Internet and an army of digital agencies and interactive advertising. This led to more sophisticated targeting, better understanding of response, and the development of corporate and brand websites along with an unprecedented level of interactivity. At the opening of the 2010s, we see the ad model is shifting yet again, with Google and Facebook leading the way in remaking communications. There's a new agenda and a new media playbook for marketers.

FROM BROADCAST TO BROAD "CATCH"

"Technology is creating new media options faster than most people can assimilate and is causing more multitasking," says Gary Drenik, president of the consumer intelligence firm BIGresearch.[8]

As we get greater Internet access, more bandwidth, and increased portability of media and content, we have discovered that consumers'

appetite for information and entertainment grows geometrically. Linear media is fast giving way to liquid media, in which consumers can move seamlessly from setting to setting. And it is commonplace for people of all ages to consume multiple media—print, audio, and video—at the same time.

The concept of mass media has shifted. Television's top-rated show 20 years ago, *The Cosby Show,* reached 27 percent of the population; today's top shows on national television would be lucky to reach a third of that audience.[9]

We're seeing media's growing long tail. As we consume more media, the existing media channels are fragmenting and new ones are being added. The proliferation of new channels means less viewer time per channel. The explosion of new video and content created by the Web and mobile platforms divides audiences into smaller and smaller segments. Current mass media markets are ephemeral, and revenues per channel will decrease.

We are moving from a world of broadcast to broad "catch." Consumers are harder to reach, and creating mass awareness is more complex. In the past, running a concurrent television and newspaper campaign was enough. People would see both. Now viewers may see one, the other, or neither. Campaigns need to be multimedia and multichannel, and creative ideas have to travel and make sense in different formats. As many as 77 percent of television viewers go online while they're watching, and websites of magazines and newspapers add video stories daily.[10]

With most media consumed with only the viewer's partial attention, the impact of advertising decreases. McKinsey estimates that television advertising is only 35 percent as effective as it was in 1990.[11] Clutter is one of the biggest problems for marketers.

An implication of this shift is that marketers need more than great creative; they need to have the message appear in the right context. For advertising to reach consumers and not be filtered out, it must be in a relevant place where the consumer will be more likely to engage with the message.

Advertising is bought and sold today in ways dramatically different from the past. Some companies aggregate audiences across multiple distribution channels—such as the digital ad networks—and others deliver

messages directly to individual users after discerning their attitudinal and consumption patterns.

EVERYONE'S A MEDIA COMPANY

We are witnessing an explosion of media creation across blogs, video and photo sites, social networks, and beyond. People's media activities are increasingly focused on participatory channels such as Facebook, Pinterest, Vine, Snapchat, Tumblr, Instagram, and many others.

On Facebook alone, users are creating and uploading 2.5 billion pieces of content every day.[12] Blogs continue to be an important channel for expert or general consumer-generated content. WordPress, the leading blog host, which powers one in six websites globally, reported that their users produce about 35.8 million new posts each month.[13]

The Huffington Post, founded by Arianna Huffington, which was acquired by AOL Inc. in 2011, has built a significant media publishing company on the back of guest contribution blogs by politicians, celebrities, and subject, matter experts. They have spearheaded a two-way dialogue with its readers, with the site recording up to nine million comments a month at its peak.[14]

Today, YouTube viewership exceeds 6 billion hours a month. But it's the content that is being created and added to the Google-owned video channel. An astonishing 100 hours of video is uploaded on YouTube minute.[15]

It's a content jungle out there, and marketers understand that is creating opportunities to engage and leverage consumers.

THE SPEED AND ACCESSIBILITY OF DATA

Ratings and readership have been the basis for media planning and the currency of media buying for the past 50 years. But marketers today have much more information about media and consumer purchase habits.

Current media measurement is designed for planning campaigns based on the principles of building brands and driving mass awareness. The industry is moving fast toward direct marketing principles that at their heart are about personalization, measuring response, and gaining more exact return-on-investment numbers.

The accessibility of data, and the speed at which it is available, has made it easier for marketers to evaluate and optimize campaigns with higher precision. Marketers have been able to adjust a campaign as it evolves, fine-tuning efficiency and response. New media-measurement techniques have allowed marketers to test and improve each campaign over time, changing creative, media placement, position, and timing.

The digital era has bypassed demographics. Marketers have a clearer picture of a consumer from the content they've viewed. Digital data could, for instance, tell a car manufacturer which model consumers looked at on their own site. They could then correlate that with the consumer's zip code (deduced from information the consumer entered on a weather site) and the consumer's tastes (from the consumer's access of sports or fashion sites).

Websites deliver a wealth of response and impact data, for instance, the number of impressions (or views), response, or cost per click, number of video views, level of engagement (time on site, number of pages viewed, purchase activity), pass-on of the site to friends and the number of 'friends' a person has. Marketers can gain insight by measuring the level and intensity of conversations via blogs, Twitter, and social networking sites. This rapid delivery and accessibility of data has created an industry built to track, evaluate, and optimize. Marketers adjust their campaigns more speedily now that they know what works and what doesn't.

Stephen DiMarco, chief marketing officer for Boston-based Compete, referring to his company's merging of data with Cannondale's to create a consumer panel with online and offline data, says, "Since we have 'matched' our panel with Cannondale, we can determine what [consumer packaged goods] products our panelists have purchased. This means we can use this information as the basis of our segmentation and then build media plans based on the recency and/or frequency of purchase in a product category like diapers."[16]

ALL MEDIA IS DIGITAL, ALL DIGITAL IS MOBILE

Established media haven't taken the shift to digital media lying down. In fact, in most cases the opposite is true. The world's oldest advertising

medium, the out-of-home (OOH) industry, is investing heavily in digi-tal OOH networks. Digital OOH inside elevators, shopping malls, airports, and on freeways is transforming static signage into real-time, digital media.

The major broadcast and cable operators have added windows and platforms beyond live broadcast to capture additional viewers. The me-dia business was built on delivering large audiences, measured by demo-graphics, and advertisers bought those audiences. Now the media business targets by content, behavior, and response. For example with ESPN, in addition to their seven TV networks, consumers are able to access live streams of their television content through WatchESPN, it's on demand TV through Apple (iPhones, iPads, Apple TV) and Android devices, as well as other streaming platforms such as Xbox, Roku and Amazon. They also have a legion of mobile apps with specific ESPN interactive content including ESPN Scoreboards, ESPN Bracket Board, Fantasy leagues and its streaming radio service.

Traditional newspaper media companies are extolling the virtues of print, PC, and mobile audiences, and delivering more video content to target a share of video ad dollars in the marketplace. And all are seeing mobile as an important platform to continue to stay relevant and carve out audiences on the move, while offering location data as part of the targeting filters that advertisers seek. AOL's Digital Prophet, David Shing, offered his perspective at a GroupM/Mindshare event that we hosted for clients, when he stated that "mobile isn't the fourth screen, but should be the first screen [for marketers]." Many media companies appear to be subscribing to this mantra.

With this increased media mash-up taking place, we are seeing the way media companies are interacting with marketers as anything but traditional. The willingness to act more as marketing partners as op-posed to time or space sellers has created more opportunities to leverage their resources and expertise. For example, the *New York Post* has set up a branded content arm that taps into their newsroom expertise to create native advertising solutions for marketers. In promoting FOX Network's *New Girl*, they created an article, "How You Know When You're on a Date with a Friend."

THE NEW MEDIA PLAYBOOK

In truth, we've been seeing the mass media age erode for some time. Search engines and social media have just added to the pressure on the gas pedal. The shift in the media world and with consumers is a double-edged sword for those in the advertising and communications business. We're an industry that thrives on fashion and fads. But the changes I've just outlined have real-world implications for developing and executing Brand Media Strategies. There are eight important implications for the new media playbook.

CREATE INVOLVEMENT AND RELEVANCE, NOT JUST AWARENESS

Advertising has always been about engaging the consumer. In the golden age of mass media, it was all about the creative: the funniest commercial, the most captivating print ad. Now advertising is as much about creating involvement and relevance as grabbing attention.

Since generating awareness is expensive and more difficult to achieve in a fragmented, partial-attention media economy, advertising relies on precision—it's less about the number of people exposed to a message and more about locating the right audience. The notion of advertising interrupting consumers is giving way to a more audience-friendly approach. As consumers filter and avoid advertising, the context of advertising is becoming as important as the content.

In today's market, advertisers are working even harder to put the right message in front of the right target group at the right time to improve the performance of their communications. To give an example, the Volkswagen Polo has been using online video to reach its customers in Europe. VW knows exactly whom it wants to target: a man between the ages of 25 and 39, who "watches soccer matches, checks out the Playboy site and reads *Der Spiegel* magazine."[17] That's a whole lot different from and more specific than the demographic buys of television, targeting men ages 18 to 34.

Christian Baudis, the European head of Tremor Media, a New York–based advertising network, tells Bloomberg, "We go to them [the client] and say here are 150 sites with video content that is attractive to that target

group. Targeted advertising is more efficient. It costs less money to reach the target. That's the beauty of it."[18]

Jeremy Allaire, head of Brightcove, a company that helps manage video content on scores of websites, adds that with online advertising, a marketer knows exactly how many people have seen the ad. In contrast to a brand impression on television, he says, "on the Internet, a video ad comes up and it's designed as a call to action for the user and they can click it, taking them to the marketing Web site."[19]

Media technology and its rapid development have increased advertisers' ability to exploit the relevance and context of the messages. But the pursuit of relevant context is not limited to digital media. Major broadcasters are exploring more integrated sponsorships or branded entertainment in program platforms. The win-win is when it works organically for the brand and the program. Print publications are developing smart advertising and editorial programs that offer synergy for brands, while cable television companies are orchestrating addressable advertising. Addressable advertising is television's version of online advertising. It targets households with relevant ads based on viewer and household data.

LET CONSUMER INSIGHT DRIVE THE MEDIA STRATEGY

Until we take steps to advance our understanding of people we won't be able to enjoy the full benefits of this exciting new age.

—Susan Gianinno, chairman and chief executive officer,

Publicis North America

Media selection is more than just reaching the consumer; it's delivering memorable, interactive, and emotional occasions with the brand. The key is planning media from the consumer's perspective. Yet media agency planners are guilty of being media facing instead of consumer facing. In the mass media era, planning was all about measuring audiences and buying media on the basis of the most efficient and best levels of coverage. Awareness has given way to involvement and relevance. Today's strategies need to be driven by communications platforms with insight at the center. We will explore this in chapter 7 in more detail, as I look to explain the use

of a central communications platform as an organizing idea behind media, driven by insights into the consumer.

MEDIA NEUTRALITY

If consumer insight drives Brand Media Strategy, then it follows that marketers and their agencies have to be Switzerland when it comes to deciding which media to use. Because influence has become more important than reach, now the hierarchy of media changes depends on the category and brand task. We can't assume television is the lead medium or that digital should drive all campaigns. Brand media dollars are too precious to make such broad statements. Nor can we rely solely on advertising as the primary marketing tool. Marketers have at their disposal paid, earned, and owned media, and each brings something to the equation.

This has major implications for marketers' approach to development of their marketing communications. The process for developing advertising needs to start with "Where should we be?" and then move to "How to say it?" rather than the other way around. All touch points help build a brand. Different mixes of marketing channels and media create different outcomes. The role of media and channel selection has become much more of a strategic decision by marketers.

MICROMEDIA AND SOCIAL MEDIA MAKE WORD-OF-MOUTH MARKETING MORE SCALABLE

Word of mouth has always been the most effective way to market a brand, and it is now more scalable. Micromedia has made it so.

Micromedia is media consumed separately from traditional media, even if traditional media outlets are producing it. Think about all the people who read the *New York Times* financial Dealbook blog, but may never pick up the newspaper. Micromedia is a video on YouTube versus E! Entertainment, or an iTunes download versus a CD.

Micromedia can be reconstructed and aggregated in many different ways, such as RSS feeds or blog networks or podcasts. Micromedia simultaneously expands the media supply and atomizes it. The size of media

products shrinks. More of us are snacking, taking bite-size pieces of media as smartphones and iPods transform downtime into opportunities to catch up on email, share information, or watch a webisode. The downside is that fewer of us are sitting down to the full five-course menu.

Social media such as Facebook and Twitter metastasize word of mouth. The benefit for marketers is that all this media activity has made the consumer conversation more widespread. Marketing messages can be spread online, and that's put new vigor behind grassroots media outlets with a closer connection to their readership. Consumers are more likely to believe other individuals than a faceless corporation. Friends and acquaintances are seen as more authentic and transparent.

Even journalists are influenced by social media: 89 percent reported using blogs for their research.[20] Earned media (free media, PR, buzz) needs to become integral to many brand communications. Consumers' participation in media means they are part of the medium and message for brands. In many cases they are willing partners if properly tapped.

SEARCH IS THE LAST MILE OF MARKETING

Search is now the most important medium in advertising. Coming from a media guy whose career has been made by developing great television, print, or OOH campaigns, that's a sweeping statement. But here's why. It's where people start to look for information and filter the information that's out there. It makes the whole experience of looking for products and services so much more personal.

It's certainly the most accountable. Google's model of weighting ads that are more relevant has rubbed off on the advertising world. The more relevant an ad message, the more effective, because the message is then seen as information. And when consumers seek information about products and services, they usually turn to Google or the likes of Bing. Search is second only to browsing in malls as the most influential activity in encouraging purchase, according to a survey by Netpop Research.[21]

No one visits a website home page anymore—they walk in the back door, the page that Google sent them to. Google is the starting point for most consumers who want to find out more about a brand or need

help making a decision. It has almost single-handedly replaced the traditional role of print advertising and in-store advice in providing product information.

Any advertising effort then should optimize the search strategy. Integrating search with an existing effort is a major opportunity. Supporting marketing efforts that are closer to the purchase occasion, when customers are in the information-gathering stage of researching a product or service, will likely improve their efficiency. Search allows marketers to tap into awareness and interest generated by your current advertising.

When Michelle Obama appeared on Jay Leno's *Tonight Show* and mentioned her outfit was from J. Crew, the retailer leaped on the opportunity, bought the search term "Michelle Obama," and set up a page on JCrew.com that promoted her outfit.

Search exploits one of the most powerful qualities of marketing: relevant messaging. It influences brand decisions and increases brand consideration when prospects are in the market. Search is not just an advertising medium; it is a sales-lead tool, so set the budget accordingly.

BRANDED CONTENT IS ROYAL

[The agency's job is to create] content so valuable and useful that [consumers] wouldn't want to live without it.

—Jeff Hicks, vice chairman, Crispin Porter + Bogusky[22]

Crispin Porter + Bogusky has in many ways led the way in mastering the mix of content and digital in communications. The agency's campaigns, such as those for Burger King and Domino's Pizza (in which they created a website where people order pizza and then can follow their order like a FedEx package), illustrate how it has managed to achieve crossover from advertising to content and entertainment.

Branded content is on the rise, and in some cases marketers can have the last word when it comes to which shows continue and which get canned. In the case of *Chuck,* an NBC show, the support of Subway—where the lead character works—helped give the series a new lease on life.

With the combination of the digitizing of all media and the increasing number of platforms on which consumers are accessing media, branded content has become an a viable alternative to the 30-second spot.

Scott Donaton, author of *Madison and Vine,* describes how branded entertainment has become an everyday reality of the communications industry as media companies look to monetize their content.[23] To meet increased interest in branded entertainment, media agencies have created internal divisions that cater to this need. Mindshare set up Mindshare Entertainment. IPG established Ensemble, and ZenithOptimedia, rolled out its global content division, NewCast, in multiple markets.

The CBS series *Survivor* helped create a new model for advertiser involvement in a television show thanks to Mark Burnett, who weaved in product rewards for contestants with a game of survival.

Advertising is mutating, and increased bandwidth has propelled it into all kinds of audiovisual content. Web users are taking brands into their own hands, whether it's creating Super Bowl commercials for Doritos or dropping mints into cans of soda on YouTube.

Entertaining content is seen as more authentic. What else could explain the stampede of brands to the writers' rooms of late-night comedians? The team for Comedy Central's Stephen Colbert created an entire segment for Kraft by setting up a tongue-in-cheek fight between mayonnaise lovers and the Kraft product Miracle Whip.

PERSONALIZATION

"In the old world of top-down, one-way communication, a company told you what you wanted to hear, and you had the choice to take it or leave it. In the new digital world of transparency and ready access to amazing quantities of detailed information on just about everything, companies will be held much more to account."

—Simon Clift, former global chief marketing officer, Unilever

In 2006, *Time* famously named as its person of the year You. The magazine reasoned that collaborative efforts such as Wikipedia, YouTube, and MySpace defined the year much more than any single individual.

Welcome to the me generation. *Time* wrote that the Web is "a tool for bringing together the small contributions of millions of people and making them matter. Silicon Valley consultants call it Web 2.0, as if it were a new version of some old software. But it's really a revolution."[24]

The individual experience is what consumers demand, what connects and engages them. Now that demand is possible to meet through technology, marketers are finding it necessary to tap into it. That started with the user experience online. The consumer's ability to interact with web content was the first step in the personalization experience. Google finds content customized to a person's search terms. Facebook pages are customized to your friend information and filtered through your news feeds.

The access to data based on behavior or stated interests is opening another door to serving up ads to users. Hulu and other video sites give you a choice of ads to view. That level of customized targeting is now offered with television ads through set-top-box data from pay-television companies or opt-in content. Mobile media provides the flexibility to build location into the messaging. The trick is in putting the bits of information back together again in a way that appeals to the viewer.

All the data is defining more customer segments that can be reached and ultimately sold to. A message that resonates with the widest group of people is relatively blunt mass media. A recession coupled with multiplying media options for targeting different segments has pushed marketers to think about whether they need to go big and reach the masses or be very selective and reach new moms or cat owners. Digital innovations such as addressable advertising platforms are helping advertisers single out the most logical target customers and the loyal enthusiasts.

Being able to pinpoint and efficiently target these micro groups with specific offers and products is making the role of Brand Media Strategy more important and effective in creating involvement and relevance. Addressable advertising trials show how much more receptive customers are when advertising messages interest them. Publicis Groupe's Starcom conducted trials in Baltimore, Maryland, and Huntsville, Alabama, in concert with sales organization Comcast Spotlight that proved that more targeted television placement increased advertising efficiency by 65 percent.[25]

The new media playbook reflects the evolving media landscape where technology has forced brands to catch up with a more wired, mobile, and attention-elusive consumer. Advertising ceased to be about just the ads a fair while ago. The digital era has changed all that. The golden age of the Brand Media Strategy has arrived.

ADAPTIVE MARKETING

Real-time or Adaptive Marketing is an approach that enables brands to tailor their market activities in fluid ways to respond to customers' interests and events based on data. It's not just about advertising, but adapting every part of the marketing mix as well as the product itself to connect more consumers with the brand, make them more relevant. It's an outcome of the speed and accessibility of data coupled with the desire by brands to embrace personalization in their marketing. This is taking the shape of product development, such as Starbucks' responding to new product ideas submitted to them by fans on their Facebook site. This could also include creating advertising based on events in real time, such as how Nike during the London Olympic Games would post congratulatory messages to their fans as their country's athletes or teams recorded successes at the event. Adaptive Marketing could also apply to packaging and services. Kleenex has introduced personalized packaging to great effect, and the Dutch airline KLM introduced a service called "Meet & Seat" to help travelers decide whom they might want to sit next to by linking their Facebook or LinkedIn profile to their flight. I'll cover how Adaptive Marketing can be applied to Brand Media Strategies in chapter 13.

A Brand Media Strategy in the digital era has to actively look to embrace these key elements of the New Media Playbook. They provide a lighthouse effect on how to engage consumers with marketing communications but also where today's media are leaning into.

A SHIFT FROM MEDIA PLANNING TO COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING

ENTER THE SUPER PLANNER

People often ask me, "What is the difference between media planning and communications planning?" My response is that media planning is focused on reaching as many of the right audience in the right place at the right time and at the right cost as possible, whereas communications planning is less about *reaching* people than *influencing* them.

> *"In today's marketing and media environment only the naïve and foolish confuse presence with impact."*
>
> —Stephen Heyer, former chief operating officer
> of The Coca-Cola Company,
> now Chief Executive Officer and
> Co-Owner of The Pod Hotel Co.

ENTER THE SUPER PLANNER AND
COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING

Communications planning allows a more strategic way of determining key media choices and connection strategies. It is about moving away from the job of delivering messages to audiences and moving toward better understanding of how consumers receive and respond to communication. The starting point is the consumer, not the media channel or the discipline. When practiced at its best, communications planning not only develops the Brand Media Strategy but also informs the creative. Communications planning has already evolved to the point that important marketers are giving it high priority. The likes of Procter & Gamble, Johnson & Johnson, and Unilever have appointed agency of records (AORs) for communications planning.

In his book *Space Race,* Jim Taylor argues that communications planning first began with Ogilvy's formulation of a 360-degree philosophy in 1997: "Soon after came Unilever's 'fish' process which later became the 'ABC' process. Within which communications planning as a discipline was born."[2]

For a long time, media strategy was based on delivering creative messages efficiently and effectively. Clients used full-service agencies that gave them a little of everything they needed, with integration between the various marketing disciplines a given.

The difficulties emerged as media agencies split off from their creative brethren as part of the great unbundling movement. This started the disintermediation between creative and media. The predominance of creative agencies as the lead agency began to be challenged as the media long tail expanded, and some clients worried that creative shops defaulted to a television or print execution to address their every marketing challenge.

The advent of specialist and independent media agencies such as Carat and Zenith in Europe began by the mid-1990s. From there they moved into the rest of the world, including the United States, separating media and creative. Initially, the driving force for the separation was to consolidate the scale and volume of media buying. But new theories have arisen about how

media channels influence the consumer, and rather than simply focusing on which media channels to choose, a handful of agencies saw a gap in the market and began pioneering the world of communications planning, a business essentially free from the legacy of advertising or mass media.

The focus on communications planning intensified in the 2000s, with over a dozen independent communications planning shops establishing themselves in London. The larger full-service media shops quickly caught up, and the discipline gained traction globally. High-end strategy was a much better sell to clients than the fast-commoditizing buying business.

As the media marketplace evolved, as summed up in the previous chapter, communications planning and the Brand Media Strategy have become more important ingredients in the advertising development process.

This was highlighted in *Advertising Age* by editor-at-large Matthew Creamer when he wrote, "As consumers' attention drifts among more and more media outlets, everyone agrees that the time is ripe for the discipline of channel planning to blossom in the US. While communications planning is more typically associated with media agencies, more full-service creative shops are incorporating into their account-planning departments the people and tools that can take apart a marketing budget in a media-agnostic way and be willing to shift spending—often away from mainline advertising."[3]

Creative agencies have experimented with communications planning as a discipline to bridge this gap. Agencies like BBH, Goodby Silverstein & Partners, and JWT established internal communications planning functions. Sometimes these were called Channel Planning or Engagement Planning or Context Planning, but all had the general purpose of partnering with account planning, creative, and digital to facilitate more integrated communications.

AN EVOLVING ADVERTISING AND COMMUNICATIONS PROCESS

As the next iteration of the Internet begins and search and social media unfold, clients' need for communications planning to rationalize their

relationships has become more urgent. Desire for integration and coordination has become a necessity.

This task has been made more complex by the growing number of agency relationships. For example, in addition to the creative and direct response agency partnerships, social media has brought public relations into the foreground, and digital agencies have mushroomed as the demand for response- and data-driven plans has grown.

Once a brand's creative strategy was at the heart of marketing. Now clients must consider as equally important the Brand Media Strategy, and ideally the two should sit together and inform each other.

This is a departure from the mass media approach of developing creative first, with media's job being to place the ads in front of the right people. As explained earlier, context, relevance, and involvement have become important components in making the communications more potent. Communications planning is about ensuring that these factors are built into the advertising process.

The Brand Media Strategy precedes the media planning process and is the principal input into the media planning brief. It also should help clients understand the best use of each touch point and how all media communication channels can be integrated.

NEW SKILLS FOR THE NEW PLANNER

Communications planning in the Google and Facebook era needs a broader set of skills and expertise beyond media planning experience and a flair for ideas.

BEING STRATEGIC

Strategy is one of the most overused and misused words in our business. People toss it around like candy on Halloween night. I've seen strategies that were really just a list of objectives. Sometimes they were tactics and initiatives. I subscribe to the Michael Porter school of strategy:

Create a unique and valuable position, involving a different set of activities. A Brand Media Strategy needs to offer unique space for the brand to

occupy and own. The communications planner doesn't just plan a campaign that meets objectives but also develops a differentiated Brand Media Strategy that will deliver a competitive advantage.

Strategy requires you to make trade-offs. A Brand Media Strategy must choose what *not* to do. No client I've ever worked with has had the budget to do everything. Being strategic requires choices, such as determining where to allocate the resources that will deliver a greater return. I always worry when I read media award papers that tout "surrounding the consumer with 360° communications." It conjures throwing stuff against the wall and seeing what sticks.

Strategy involves creating fit among your activities. Brand Media Strategy works best when media ideas, initiatives, and tactics combine into a bigger and more complete strategic platform or idea. This is particularly important in a world with an increasing number of touch points. The consumer's consistently getting the same message is key to integrated communications.[4]

DIGITAL PROFICIENCY IS ESSENTIAL

Adding digital expertise across the agency functions has become a priority, and no more so than with the communications planner. While you don't need to be fully proficient in analytic algorithms, you have to help manage digital.

In this media mash-up, it doesn't make sense to have only a digital strategy or a mobile strategy. Clients are looking for "a strategy." The real challenge for marketers is to integrate digital solutions into the total plan. What role do they play now, and how should the budget be allocated? Given its importance, I will deal with this specifically in chapter 9.

ACQUIRING EXPERTISE IN CONSUMER INSIGHT

Getting a feel for customers' emotional response to a category or brand I found to be the most challenging skill to develop for communications planners coming from general media agency or media planner backgrounds. Media planning has traditionally been more analytic than those other

backgrounds. Evaluating the quantitative performance of media plans based on reach, frequency, or cost efficiency is second nature. So is analyzing brand and purchase data or optimizing digital performance marketing campaigns. However, the notion of using intuition or gut feel makes many planners uncomfortable. My experience collaborating with the planning teams at the agencies I've worked at was that acquiring consumer insight is a skill that can be developed. I found that once the planners had some experience in it, they became more confident. I know of some media agencies that have gotten there by hiring creative agency account planners. Whichever way you go, insight development skills are absolutely central to establishing Brand Media Strategies in the new marketing world. We will cover insights in depth in chapter 5.

MULTICHANNEL UNDERSTANDING

Digital media adds complexity as well as opportunity to marketing plans. Traditional definitions of advertising have expanded in integrated communications. Being media neutral means deploying a wide selection: one-to-one, experiential, word-of-mouth, point-of-purchase and point-of-consumption media. The need for channel planning and selection is becoming a key requirement for brands, as is message integration across all marketing channels. The rigor and measurement that media agency planners offered in traditional media is being demanded across this vast choice of channels.

THE RISE OF THE GEEKS

Big data and data planning have become an increasing focus by marketers and their agencies. Performance marketing and business data to develop insights and optimize marketing communications programs are fast becoming as important as ideas and the creative process. And with that comes more rigor and confidence in the accountability and scalability of the planning. Data has become an essential ingredient for marketing and businesses opened up by the access and trackability of a consumer's interactions with marketing, retail, and media channels. While it's not a

requirement for the communications planner to not be at the center of this analytics, they do need to be able understand and develop strategies that exploit data. I cover how media strategy is evolving with the explosion of data in chapter 13.

COLLABORATION QUALITIES

If you think about the expertise we've just discussed, the communications planner really does have to be a super planner. In truth, it is rare to find all these skills in one person. That's why I've found that one of the most important qualities is the ability to collaborate and work openly and closely with those who have these skills, whether in the agency or outside it. This is not a profession for a control freak! In my experience the best magic in planning comes when it's not clear where an idea comes from, when it isn't clear where the role of one member in the client's communications team starts and another's finishes. If this can be facilitated, then you've achieved the communications planning Shangri-la.

DEVELOPING STRUCTURE FOR COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING

The best part about being a communications planner is having the creativity and freedom to develop and present your ideas in a very individual way. I've never been an advocate of paint-by-numbers planning or insisted on following a strict process.

I've found that the best planners bring different ideas and perspectives to a problem and won't be put in a box. Two of the most impressive planners I have worked with directly are Derek Morris and Gerry Boyle at ZenithOptimedia's UK office. (Both have since moved on from planning to much bigger roles in the Publicis corporate world.) Derek was a deliberator who sought input and allowed ideas to bubble and evolve for several weeks before landing on a direction. Gerry in contrast would lock himself in his office and emerge the next morning having nailed a strategy. Both were amazingly effective at reaching solutions, but each got there his own way.

I've worked with planners who are very visual, planners who are analytic, planners who are superorganized, and planners who struggle to make

it into the office before 11:00 A.M! They've all brought something special and unique to our agency's planning product. My point is that it's necessary to create a broad framework and provide the tools that help steer the planning, but it's more important to create a culture around planning and a planner community that is constantly striving to push the product forward.

If you work at or with an agency, it will have its own *proprietary* communications planning system or approach. In most cases, the approaches are constantly being refreshed. In fact, it has become a cliché for the comms planning department to roll out a new process every few years. This book isn't about selling my own agency ideas and philosophy, but I've provided in the following pages some helpful techniques and tools for planners and creative people.

A FRAMEWORK TO DEVELOP EFFECTIVE BRAND MEDIA STRATEGIES

Perhaps it goes without saying that, while there is an element of art and intuition in communications planning, the Brand Media Strategy needs to be commercial. In other words, planners ought to be offering something that will help sell more product.

The strategy should be clearly defined and have a point of view: Who are we trying to communicate to? How should the communication work? The communications planner must also make some clear choices and trade-offs about how and where the budget will be spent. The constant temptation for agencies and clients is to jump into specific solutions and move to the tactical too soon. They want to create a television ad or a print campaign, a social media program or a mobile app. The focus is on executing the work or the plan. In my experience, there is often insufficient scrutiny given to budget allocation and the communications mix. This happens for obvious reasons. Specialist agencies are compensated upon execution. Even on the client side, units within the marketing department opt to protect their budgets. Separately, they have strong data about how their individual channels perform, but very little on how they work in conjunction.

Within the marketer's own organizations, silos are also a struggle. A report from the Association of National Advertisers noted that "nearly 60 percent of respondents said significant change was needed in their business' approach to marketing if its function was to shift to a higher, more visionary level. One fourth of respondents said significant change was needed by their team and department."[5]

That's why the Brand Media Strategy has become a more important strategic function. Its role is to address two important questions: where to play, and how to win. *Where* means touch points; stages of the buying process; the time of day, week, and year; and individual media vehicles. *How* refers to the way media is used to drive the brand messaging harder than and differently from the competition and the way the media is leveraged to create response. Understanding where and how to advertise comes before determining what to say and the tactics that will take that message to the target consumer.

The growth in the number of new digital channels and technologies has given more scope for brands to deliver more sophisticated and differentiated Brand Media Strategies. For instance, Coca-Cola and Pepsi have for over a century competed head to head. They are very similar products, but use very different Brand Media Strategies. In 2010 Pepsi opted not to advertise in the Super Bowl, preferring to launch a social media campaign instead. Coca-Cola meanwhile continued to advertise during the big game.

Marketers have sought to create advertising that either reinforces brand messaging or elicits a response from the customer. These goals are not exclusive, however; marketing can do both. A mixture of media tactics and how the tactics are used is important in achieving these goals.

Two key tools that we will use are the Consumer Pathway and the Brand Media Strategy Wheel©. These are important tools to help us develop and evaluate brand media strategies and help us with decisions in communications planning.

THE CONSUMER PATHWAY

The Consumer Pathway is an important strategic platform for building the Brand Media Strategy. The Consumer Pathway, shown in Figure 3.1,

FIGURE 3.1
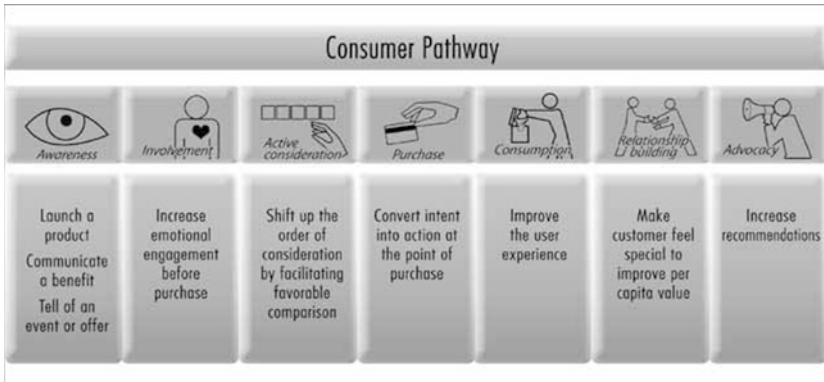
is an updated version of the traditional brand or purchase funnel. The funnel was based on a marketing model that put capturing consumers through brand awareness at the top of a funnel and then filtered consumers down through various stages toward purchase.

In a digital-driven media world, that model has been turned on its head. Marketers know that the funnel model isn't always efficient, and they have developed different strategies for engaging consumers more directly at different stages at which they can influence purchase.

We know from our own purchase habits that people can buy a product without even being aware of the brand. An investor may buy a financial product solely on the basis of her financial adviser's recommendation and not need to remember the product name. Google can put a brand straight into a consumer's active consideration, or even purchase, if he clicks a link while searching online. Brands such as Starbucks have been built through user experience and word of mouth. The coffee chain has only more recently begun to advertise in paid mass media.

The Consumer Pathway comprises stages of brand influence: awareness of a product or service, involvement, active consideration, purchase (conversion), consumption (usage), relationship building, and advocacy.

It is important to gain insight into the consumer at each stage. Every product or service has the same basic stages, but brands within a category will have different brand hurdles. Also, the consumer relationship with a

brand does not end with the purchase. It is important for planners to think beyond the purchase and consider consumption and usage. Even that isn't the end of the story, however. Advocacy begins the cycle again when the customer recommends the product or service to others.

The Consumer Pathway is the base of the marketing effort. In an ideal world, the communications planner would be able to identify strategies and tactics that would address each of the stages, but the real world has budgets. In fact, a communications plan that claims to do everything is a sure sign of insufficient clarity about what's needed or an ineffective plan.

Through media, marketers are able, but can't afford, to engage and target consumers at every stage of the purchasing process.

Awareness: The first stage is awareness, when consumers discover that a product or service may solve a problem they didn't know they had. It could be a new category, a new product, a new brand, or a new or improved function or role.

This stage centers on creating visibility and recognition. Driving awareness for brands could be a significant outcome if the brand is new or there is a new benefit or idea to communicate. However, simply driving awareness is no guarantee of sales. Given that this is the most expensive to achieve in media dollars, particularly for a mass audience, setting out awareness as a communications goal is an important strategic decision.

Involvement: As consumers become more familiar with and gain more interest in the product or service, they get involved. This is the "just looking" stage, when the customer is finding out whether the product or service is right, and the customer is therefore open to persuasion. At this point the consumer needs experiences and information about the product. "This brand (or product) is like X, for people who need Y."

Active Consideration: Once engaged, consumers need to know more. They are doing their homework; they're perhaps asking for samples and seeking to customize. This stage is about getting the brand onto the short list. Ultimately, it's about increasing brand preference and purchase intent. Active consideration means the consumer is making comparative investigations. "Why is A better than B?"

Purchase Conversion: The moment the consumer decides to buy a specific product or service but hasn't paid for it is the moment when

the planner has to convert the decision to a purchase. It is the point of commitment.

Consumption (Usage): The act of consuming, or using, the product or service is the customer experience. It is the point at which consumers discover whether the product or service delivers what it promised and they're deciding whether they like it.

Relationship Building: From a business perspective, relationship building is about selling another one by encouraging repurchase or cross-selling. It is about forming a bond with consumers and reaffirming that they made the right choice. It's important to understand the promise, the contract with the customer, that was made and to deliver more than was promised.

Advocacy: Current customers speak out in support of your brand in the advocacy stage. It is the creating and enabling of word of mouth and recommendation.

In the mass media era, a more conventional Brand Media Strategy would involve using media to collect consumers at the top of the funnel, to build awareness. This is still a valid strategy for a lot of brands, but in the digital, mobile, and social era more stock is put in driving relevance and involvement, later stages in the consumer pathway. Google and ecommerce websites are driving consideration and purchase. Facebook, Twitter, and other media sites give existing consumers a greater voice in the final stage of advocacy.

Media companies have become adept at leveraging their content across media platforms that affect the different stages of the Consumer Pathway. Understanding where the stages of Brand Media Strategy intersect with the Consumer Pathway is the next stage in helping the marketer reach the consumer.

THE BRAND MEDIA STRATEGY WHEEL

The wheel shown in Figure 3.2 displays the chief issues a planner needs to address in the Brand Media Strategy. The first issue is understanding the communications challenge—establishing communication goals and defining their key performance indicators (KPIs). Then comes discovery, uncovering the target audience insight, which leads to understanding

FIGURE 3.2

The Brand Media Strategy Wheel©

Note: KPI, key performance indicator.

moments of receptivity. Campaign architecture is next. The Brand Media Strategy requires creating a communications platform that works in synergy with creative and involves touch-point recommendations. Finally, it is about the brand or campaign idea and its amplification, followed by integrated execution and measurement.

The rest of the book covers how we address these communications issues of the Brand Media Strategy Wheel.

FOCUSING ON OUTCOMES, NOT OUTPUTS

SETTING THE BRAND MEDIA STRATEGY COMMUNICATION GOALS

A clearly articulated, inspiring and measurable communication goal is the cornerstone of a successful Brand Media Strategy. That's why this chapter may well be the most important in the book.

Having viewed many advertising campaigns, either at my own agency, or as a judge at award competitions, I have a few observations: all too often, the focus is on the tactics, the "how we did it" part, and planners are unable to clearly articulate the Brand Media Strategy. I have noticed that in award submissions or the trade press, the emphasis is more on how the plan was executed, particularly its creativity or innovation. Agencies lack insight into how a communications strategy directly contributed to the business outcome. And while they report impressive post-campaign metrics, they often omit a clear statement of the communication goals that should have been established at the outset.

Because advertising is multifaceted, encompassing many media, disciplines, and programs, you can't lose sight of its fundamental role: to create a marketing return on investment (ROI). This chapter is about establishing such accountability at the outset.

MARKETERS UNDER GROWING PRESSURE
TO SHOW RETURN ON INVESTMENT

ROI metrics have always been the sine qua non for marketers. Sluggish economic growth and the increase in more accountable digital media have put executives under much greater pressure to show ROI for their programs.

Lorrie Foster of The Conference Board, marketing and management consultants, observes, "In the past, marketing awareness and brand-building activities were enough to define marketing's mission and role in a company, and to justify its budget. . . . But the focus of marketing has evolved toward more strategic, value-added activities that can be quantified and linked to corporate goals. New approaches, methodologies and tools, and technologies are making it possible to link marketing investments directly to revenues and profits, holding marketing executives accountable for achieving expected results."[1]

THE IMPORTANCE OF SETTING
COMMUNICATION GOALS

In *Profitable Marketing Communications—A Guide to Marketing Return on Investment,* I explored why campaigns fail to create value for their companies.[2] There are two main reasons: First, there is not a clear understanding of the goals or the key performance indicators (KPIs) at the outset of the campaign. Second, there is no process for consistently evaluating progress, and so campaigns lack sufficient focus and consistency.

Most marketers and agencies do a very good job at validating their work, but the measurement is too often used to justify activity, rather than drive the effort. Marketing consultancy CMG Partners, in Durham, North Carolina, conducted a study of four hundred top business executives. The study found that only a quarter thought their marketing was effective. All this goes to underline the importance of setting communication goals at the start of the process. And what's critical is to ensure that these goals are commercial, actionable, and measurable.

OUTCOMES VERSUS OUTPUTS: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

One of the key foundations of the Brand Media Strategy is setting communication goals that are based on outcomes and not on outputs.

Reach (coverage), frequency, impressions, gross rating points (GRPs), and cost per response are everyday media metrics that are easy to measure. Because they're easy, communications planners tend to overuse them to justify recommendations. These outputs are often used rather than checkpoints on the path of campaign management, for example, "our objective is to maximize reach and frequency" or "our goal is to lower the cost per response." Overreliance on these outputs risks chief marketing officers not approving budgets, because although measurable, these outputs don't explain how the communications strategy will help drive the marketing ROI.

Most media metrics were designed to be used as a guide for the effectiveness of trading or pricing terms. They were more relevant when the goal was advertising awareness and in a world where advertising plans were driven by one or two principal media. Today, media programs typically consist of four to ten different media channels.

START WITH THE WHY

Joe Marchese, president of socialvibe, wrote in MediaPost, "It's as if the new social media reality is forcing marketers and agencies to reevaluate the reasons for advertising in the first place."[3] One of the biggest challenges to marketers is not measurement but getting chief executive officers and chief financial officers to buy into ad campaigns.

A good way to start the communications planning process is to ask a very basic question: why advertise? Often this isn't asked. But if a company's objective is to improve profitability, then I can almost guarantee you that *cutting* advertising will improve a company's profitability within a financial year! Marketing budgets generally range from 2 percent to 20 percent of a company's expenses, which means in any year (good or bad) a chief financial officer is going to question the value of advertising. We must therefore be able to explain its value before embarking on planning.

Asking the Who, How, Where, and When questions is all very well, but the most important is Why. I've found that agencies are good at recommending and developing solutions and plans, but not as good at building the case for advertising itself.

Media agencies talk about engagement and awareness, and they sell eyeballs or media platforms. Creative agencies talk about how to build brands and reputation, and they sell ideas. Digital agencies focus on response and interaction. But all of us in advertising are guilty of discussing features rather than the key benefit, which is marketing ROI.

Sergio Zyman, the former Coca-Cola chief marketing officer who helped boost its worldwide annual sales volume from 9 billion to 15 billion cases, famously defined marketing success as "sell[ing] more stuff to more people more often for more money more efficiently."[4]

LET'S BREAK THIS DOWN.

Selling more stuff to more people: Marketing needs to attract new customers to the brand. Advertising can help by opening new markets, promoting new products, driving in more foot traffic, or increasing the rate of trial.

Selling more often: Advertising persuades people to buy more often. Reminding people when they are returning to the market to buy is as important as informing them of a new product or feature. We'll cover the theory of recency later in this chapter.

Selling for more money: Advertising has always been about selling, but there are alternatives that can help companies sell more. Price cuts and promotions can move product. For example, if Apple were to discount iPhones by 50 percent, the tech giant could sell a lot more, and probably without bothering to advertise the discount. To be able to get more for a product relies almost entirely on differentiation, and that's where branding comes in. People will pay more for Nike iDs, Apple Macbooks, or BMWs, even though they might perform no better than similar products, because they are perceived as being different and better.

Selling more efficiently: Advertising offers the ability to talk to a larger audience cost effectively. If marketers could have 15 minutes one-on-one

with every potential customer, they would be very persuasive. Advertising helps companies scale a sales pitch to a broad audience.

TRANSLATING BUSINESS GOALS INTO
COMMUNICATION GOALS

Communication goals involve understanding how the communications will drive business goals. It is important not to confuse the two. "Increase sales" is not a communication goal. "Increase market share growth" is not a communication goal. They are business goals—the end game. Simply stating that we need to grow sales by X isn't particularly helpful in shaping the Brand Media Strategy. No, the role of the communications planner is to translate business goals into something that steers media, creative, PR, and digital specialist teams as they perform their communications tasks.

Effective communication goals encompass two key qualities. First, they need to have a *direct line of sight* between the communications and the business outcomes. Before we can say, "Here is what we are doing" or "This is who we are targeting" or "This is where we are advertising," we need to be able to explain in simple terms how the communications is going to directly translate to the marketing or business goal. For a chief marketing officer or company board to understand how the Brand Media Strategy is going to help sell more stuff, it needs to be expressed in well-articulated commercial terms. Second, the communication goal needs to inspire ideas and creative ways to meet the goal. In this world of ROI and accountability, we have to remember that communications is still a creative task of influencing people. The Brand Media Strategy needs a communication goal that helps the teams responsible for developing and executing the communications identify relevant, influential, and penetrating platforms and activation in media.

When our agency was planning a Denny's advertising campaign, Nelson Marchioli, then the chief executive officer of Denny's, told us that getting an existing customer to make a repeat visit would increase annual sales 10 percent. And getting a lapsed customer (one who had not been to a Denny's in six months or more) to return would increase sales by 11 percent. We made our communication goal to "get people to come

back to Denny's one more time." That short and simple phrase provided a clear idea of what the communications needed to do. It was commercial which was helpful to get buy-in from the many stakeholders in the company. Almost as valuable, it stimulated a lot of communications ideas. It made us, the media agency, think about how to get people to reappraise the brand. More importantly, it generated ideas that very directly affected guest counts, such as the free Grand Slam breakfast advertised during the Super Bowl and the innovative use of independent music artists that made late-night visits to Denny's attractive.

Developing communication goals comprises four steps:

- Break down the business goals into specifics.
- Identify how and where media can help.
- Quantify what success will look like.
- Prioritize and socialize the goals.

BREAK DOWN THE BUSINESS GOALS INTO SPECIFICS

It is important to define the business goals as specifically as possible. There's a lot packed into Sergio Zyman's "sell more stuff, to more people, more often, for more money, more efficiently." The key question that you need to ask is, "Where will most of the business growth come from?

Does a retailer want to increase foot traffic into stores, increase the average basket size, or bring new customers into the franchise? Perhaps the client wants to expand distribution channels or increase frequency of purchase. Or does the company want to launch a new product or change how consumers perceive a product? Maybe the brand wants to encourage or increase trial.

Clients may not immediately tell you their goal. Maybe they're too busy or they don't know you need to know it. If so, prompt them to tell you! If you don't know where you're going, it's hard to tell someone else how to get there.

Unfortunately, none of us always has ideal, picture-perfect client briefs. A good communications planner works with what's available: do some homework. Develop a point of view on what you think the goal

should be. Talk to the other managers on the marketing or sales teams. Have a meeting with the other agency partners. Ask your chief executive officer, who might have discussed the brief with a senior member of the client. Then run your thoughts by the client before you start the planning process. Most people have an easier time telling you what they do or don't want when you present them with options.

USING THE CONSUMER PATHWAY

The Consumer Pathway provides an excellent way to frame the media communication goal (see Figure 4.1). Is it a goal that requires an awareness solution? Is this a campaign that needs to change or build perceptions within a particular customer group (that is, involvement)? Does the brand have satisfactory awareness but needs to convert awareness to more sales? For Denny's, almost everyone was aware of the brand and had a pretty clear perception of it. But they had most likely visited years ago and were unaware of the significant improvements Denny's had made in their menu and restaurants in the past few years. The challenge was getting people to try the *new* Denny's.

In addition, classifying the communication goal as a stage of the Consumer Pathway pinpoints where and how the communications will drive consumers to purchase and answers the "Why advertise" question.

FIGURE 4.1

IDENTIFY HOW AND WHERE MEDIA CAN HELP

Perhaps the next important question is identifying where media can make the biggest impact versus other marketing channels. Brands have several marketing strategies available. In some cases they will be media led, and in other cases media is less likely to be a driver. For example, customer service or the customer experience is invariably an important factor in almost all service brands. For one of my agency's cosmetics brand clients, training make-up consultants or upgrading store beauty counters is a critical marketing priority, but not likely to involve a media solution.

BUILDING AWARENESS

Launch a product, communicate a benefit, or tell of an event or offer
While I advocate in chapter 2 that marketers drive involvement and relevancy, building awareness is still important for many brands. In the mass media age, driving awareness was the default and generic communication goal for advertising. The Brand Media Strategy largely concentrated on generating awareness of the creative through mass media. For example, in promoting a new prescription drug or a President's Day sale for Macy's national store, the goal will primarily be to drive awareness.

If awareness is the goal, the media strategy should concentrate on effective-frequency levels. *Effective frequency* is essentially the number of times a person is exposed to an advertising message before responding. Studies have found that from one to five or more exposures are necessary, depending on factors such as the size of the print ad or the length of the commercial, the complexity of the message or the competitive clutter.

Today, planners tend to use awareness-tracking data or models to set ideal frequency levels, or they use media weights to project the awareness levels generated by advertising. Once frequency levels are established, media planners and buyers seek to maximize the plan's reach, or coverage of the target audience, as efficiently as possible.

INVOLVEMENT

Increase emotional engagement before purchase

If the objective is to build the brand or drive brand reappraisal, then the communication goal will be in the involvement stage of the Consumer Pathway. Increasing brand involvement also increases awareness.

Typical goals here might include the following:

- Increase consumer understanding of the brand's strengths or its unique selling point.
- Increase the brand's appeal to target X.
- Influence consumers to see brand X as the most reliable.

McDonald's has almost ubiquitous awareness and has become a destination for family dining, a place to take your kids. When they promoted their McCafe's, the challenge was less to create awareness than to get consumers thinking of them as a destination for lattes. They developed a campaign that aimed to demonstrate that they offered lattes without the pretentiousness of a Starbucks. One of the tactics they employed was creating the website unsnobbycoffee.com.

ACTIVE CONSIDERATION

Shift up the order of consideration by facilitating favorable comparison

Conversion of brand awareness or interest into preference occurs in the active-consideration stage. This might include putting a brand in with its consideration set or providing information or opinion to help the shopper consider the brand more favorably.

Lexus in Europe discovered that their conversion of test drives to sales was significantly higher than that of Mercedes Benz, BMW, or Audi. They shifted their communication goal away from a branding or awareness goal to one of getting more potential customers into showrooms for test drives. This communication goal resulted in their moving away from traditional brand advertising in business and lifestyle magazines. Instead,

the Brand Media Strategy involved online advertising and partnering with five-star hotels, airports, and premium vacation spots to provide test-drive information and opportunities for test drives. In addition to differentiating their media approach from competitors that outspent them, they dramatically increased the overall ROI.

PURCHASE

Convert intent into action
Goals that focus on driving conversion or purchase could include using media such as brochures inserted into newspapers or coupons with promotional offers. Search and other digital channels is a common strategy to drive traffic to ecommerce sites that are planned and bought on a cost-per-acquisition basis.

From awareness to reminder advertising
The emphasis on awareness-building advertising and the need to deliver effective frequency shifted in the nineties to reminder advertising, based on the concept of recency. One of the catalysts for this change was the breakthrough book *How Advertising Works,* by John Philip Jones, a professor at Syracuse University.[5]

The idea was that well-known brands of consumer packaged goods such as Coke or Pantene don't need to build awareness; they already have it. The goal of the advertising should be *reminding* the consumer to buy the product at the point closest to the place of purchase. Recency theory was supported by exhaustive research and academic analysis. I recall that this book shifted the paradigm of Brand Media Strategy. Clients such as Procter & Gamble and Coca-Cola globally moved from awareness-driving to reminder-based tactics.

As a result, recency planning became a Brand Media Strategy that encouraged continuous advertising, since people are shopping every day and week of the year. Recency planning is less concerned with building brand equity than reinforcing the proposition and converting that awareness and brand knowledge to purchase.

This study still has a lot of validity for many established media brands. And despite new and emerging media, the principle of reminding consumers of your brand and placing it close to the shopping occasion, either in time or physical location, remains an effective strategy. For example, Nestlé's Buitoni knew their customers were professional, working women wanting to pick up a meal on their way home. They targeted advertising for their chilled pasta to the end of the workday at out-of-home sites, point-of-sale locations, and websites.

CONSUMPTION AND RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

The consumption and relationship-building stages often didn't involve media solutions in the past. However, media's definition is expanding, and smart agencies have used media to influence consumers even at these stages. Customer-relationship-management marketing programs that incorporate email marketing or other media partners have been known to reinforce the relationship with a brand.

Coors Light cleverly used packaging to promote the user experience. They introduced a cold-activated beer can to the market; it turned blue when it reached 44 degrees Fahrenheit.

Scrappy online shoe store Zappos.com related how in its early days, the company had very little media budget, so it emphasized salesperson training and customer-service interaction as the primary medium to build positive word of mouth and loyalty. Seventy-five percent of their business is repeat customers, and so according to CEO Tony Hsieh, they took a lot of the money that they would have normally spent on paid advertising and put it back into customer experience.[6]

ADVOCACY

Increase recommendation

Buzz, or word-of-mouth recommendation, is increasingly important in this Facebook era. This was well demonstrated when candidate Barack Obama shifted from the conventional political advertising strategy of targeting undecided voters to getting his advocates to persuade undecided voters.

Figure 4.2 shows a beauty care example of areas to explore for communication goals across the Consumer Pathway.

FIGURE 4.2

Beauty Care Example

	Awareness	Involvement	Active Consideration	Purchase (Conversion)	Consumption (Usage)	Relationship Building	Advocacy
Consumer Thought	I want to look good, stay looking young. I heard brand X has a new ...	I usually buy brand Y. Should I give brand X a go? Packaging looks good and it got a good review in *Cosmo*	I check it out. I'll ask my beautician / go to Macy's; they'll have a sampler. I wonder how much it costs?	I'll take this, please.	(Unwrap & use) Great packaging, it's so light, no greasy feeling, smells nice too.	My skin feels smoother. And their website had some great tips and advice! This is the stuff for me.	Telling friend, You should try XXX, I swear by it. Indecently, so does Sarah J Parker.
Brand Action	Launch a product Communicate a benefit Tell of an event or offer	Increase emotional engagement before purchase	Shift up the order of consideration by facilitating favorable comparison	Convert intent into action at the point of purchase	Improve the user experience	Make customer feel special to improve per capita value	Increase recommendations
	Get noticed	Engage	Close the deal	Don't let them change their mind	Deliver what you promised	Make them feel special	Help them to help you

QUANTIFY WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE

To define success and prioritize potential goals, you need to know where the client stands on their existing measures.

Start with overall sales and market share. The chief executive officer, chief marketing officer, or head of sales will have these figures because their job depends on them. Their bonus might even be attached to the figures. They will be hugely interested if you can tell them how you're going to improve these numbers. Then you need to drill down into the defined communication goals and establish their KPIs.

Measures for awareness, brand equity, or active consideration will likely already exist, either through customer tracking or consumer attitude and usage studies. Digital data such as search inquiries, website traffic, or social media tracking can provide useful measures. If those aren't available, then recommending some sort of tracking is in order. Figure 4.3 shows

FIGURE 4.3

Measuring Campaigns against Objectives

typical data sources for tracking campaign goals against the stages of the Consumer Pathway.

HOW DO YOU QUANTIFY THE GOAL?

Now the hard part is figuring out the increase the client expects according to the KPIs. Marketers might not have defined the increase, but knowing the goal of the task is critical in deciding whether the Brand Media Strategy will work and in determining the budget.

Those benchmarks will tell you whether the budget is sufficient or whether the objectives are unachievable. If benchmarks don't exist, then you will have to make estimates based on past experience or other categories. In fact, for 70 percent of campaigns this is usually the case. Set a target and benchmark for future planning periods. Then ask, what revenue will this generate if this succeeds?

CASE STUDY: NEW STEEL

The American Iron and Steel Institute developed an advertising campaign to promote steel as a source of raw material. The consortium set the objective to make steel the "material of choice" for the packaging, car manufacture, construction, housing, and appliance industries.

An initial investment of $20 million a year defined the terms of success and introduced surrogate measures. The consortium asked itself, "What actions or outcomes will need to occur to make it worth the investment?"

Here, they drew on the experience and expertise of teams that had implemented similar campaigns, and consulted previous case studies. They also set methods and models on which strategy and measurement would be based, and built frequent and direct interaction into the process, with people driving strategy and execution.

A research consultant made recommendations about the methodology. By meeting with key executives, the right expectations were set.

The campaign's goals were articulated in measurable terms so that everyone involved could buy into what the campaign was trying to achieve. The metrics were set based on significant improvement against the current market value and then agreed with the stakeholders. They included the following:

- Awareness had to increase from 10 percent to 25 percent.
- Favorability had to move from the benchmark score of 58 to at least 70.
- To claim "material of choice," the thermometer for steel would need to move from last to first place versus its competitors.
- The positive to negative comments ratio had to move from 2:3 to 6:1.[7]

PRIORITIZE AND SOCIALIZE THE GOALS

One of the biggest factors in campaign failures is insufficient budget to deliver the goals. Trying to do too much with too little budget is a recipe for disaster. It comes from an unwillingness to make hard choices in setting the communication goals.

A SINGLE GOAL IS BEST

The temptation is to want to do everything. Having too many objectives ensures a lack of clarity. I really do subscribe to Napoleon's axiom that "one bad general is worth two good ones," or one goal is always better than two.

Having too many goals just creates a lack of accountability and clarity. I always worry when a marketer says, "Our goal is to drive sales, create buzz, drive awareness, build consideration, and grow the brand." I try to discourage clients from tracking and targeting a dozen metrics. Juggling so many metrics dilutes goals. Several goals will be partially achieved, but the most important one will not be fully achieved.

Select a primary goal, one that can be consistently tracked across all efforts. With that one goal in mind, you can create measurable objectives and keep all tactics focused on them. When you achieve those objectives, you're in a good position to prove your worth and defend your budget.

PRIORITIZING GOALS

When you can't have just one primary goal, which is often the case, list the goals. By each one note what metric you would use to judge it. How would improving those metrics change things? Rank the goals in terms of what's important and which would make the biggest difference in terms of sales. Which would be most likely to drive the primary business goal? There is no need for absolute accuracy as this exercise is only to indicate a direction. Then suppose you invested 90 percent, 75 percent, or 50 percent of the budget—how does that affect the goal? Move to the second goal in your ranking. This time, suppose you spent 50 percent, 33 percent, or 15 percent of the budget. What effect would that have on the goal?

Repeat for each potential goal.

BRANDING THE GOAL

When I was a planner working on Procter & Gamble campaigns, I recall, the company was great at marketing their marketing: coming up with a catchy phrase to describe a goal. For example, Procter & Gamble talked about "winning at the two moments of truth." Those two moments are when the consumer is about to buy and use the product.

There's merit in branding a communication goal. It makes it more memorable and inspirational. It helps everyone from the chief executive

officer to the frontline sales and customer-service teams grasp the concept. Be sure to market the goal inside and outside the company.

The goal should ideally describe an action that involves the consumer. Walmart's chief marketing officer, Stephen Quinn, says that his company's goal is to help deliver true value to customers.[8] The company's developed a winning marketing campaign around the goal to "Give people ideas to save money." At Coca-Cola, the goal for one brand team was to convince young men that Coke Zero tastes like regular Coke. Similarly, at computer giant HP, the goal was to make personal computers cool again. A single rallying cry will inspire solutions, and there's no need to keep it secret. If everyone knows what your strategy is, then they can help you execute it.

QUESTIONS IN SETTING THE COMMUNICATION GOALS

1. Does the communication goal have a clear line of sight to the business goal?
2. What stages of the Consumer Pathway does the goal target?
3. What is the primary goal?
4. Does the goal inspire the communications?

INSIGHT OVER ANALYSIS

FINDING A WAY IN FOR THE BRAND MEDIA STRATEGY

THE ROLE OF CONSUMER INSIGHT IN DEVELOPING THE BRAND MEDIA STRATEGY

In the media world we are awash with statistics. We love the sanctuary of data. It's safe. It's predictable. But does it tell us anything new? Demographics, psychographics, and audience figures distract from the importance of personalizing marketing. Communication should be about focusing on people rather than consumers. *People* are individuals, new moms, an office worker on her lunch hour, or a young family buying their first new car. They're not a number on a spreadsheet.

> *"Data is not information, information is not knowledge, knowledge is not understanding, understanding is not wisdom."*
>
> – Cliff Stoll and Gary Schubert[1]

As a communications planner, it's crucial for you to be consumer facing rather than media facing. Remember, media planning is about reaching the right people at the right places; communications planning is about influencing people. And an important part of influencing is understanding

how the group you are trying to connect with thinks, behaves, and lives their lives. And yes, of course, how they consume media and respond to communications.

Analyzing audience surveys or syndicated media or product reports alone won't give you those answers. Yes, they can tell you how many people are watching this or reading that. But clues to how they might respond better to different communication strategies? Much less likely. Media surveys commoditize consumers into common audience demographic groups. So a ratings point on the History Channel or ESPN is treated exactly the same despite being very different programming attracting viewers with different mind-sets.

Using the same syndicated data that all your competitors have will lead to the same strategies and solutions, hardly the formula for creating distinct and penetrating campaigns. Using the same research that others use encourages premium pricing, as advertisers in a category chase the same positions and the same titles or television shows. The old way of doing things assumes that media works the same way for every brand. This dictates that advertisers compete on share of voice by outspending competitors.

For a communications planner, having insight about your target is what differentiates your plan. To have insight, the communications planner needs to be the consumer's best friend.

FROM WHERE TO HOW

Developing insights is the key to unlocking a way in for the Brand Media Strategy, insights into not just which media or marketing communication touch points to advertise in but also how to use those media.

Syndicated media audience surveys from the likes of Nielsen, Arbitron, TNS, and comScore provide extensive data on which media audiences spend time where. They do exactly what they are designed to do, which is to establish the scale of target audiences. Mass media strategies to maximize reach and frequency use this audience data to establish awareness.

Digital data from performance marketing campaigns has added more dimensions to traditional media research. For example, Google's tools and

web tracking have allowed richer insight into the consumer's decision-making process and better understanding of consumers' reactions to ad messaging and their post-campaign buying habits. Thanks to social listening, we can get consumers' immediate feedback to develop the all-important insight.

As shown in Figure 5.1, insight has facilitated the shift from media planning to communications planning.

FIGURE 5.1

A Change in Approach to Media Communications
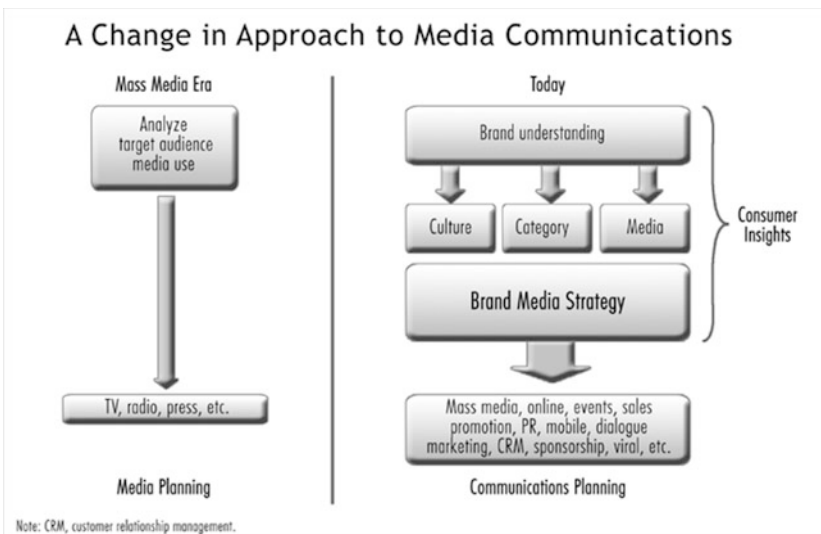
ACCOUNT PLANNING ESTABLISHED INSIGHT IN ADVERTISING

Agency account planning is very much the forebear to communications planning.

Account planning was invented in the United Kingdom by Stanley Pollitt in 1965. He was a founding partner of Boase Massimi Pollitt (BMP, now DDB) and established account planning by bringing in a researcher to work as an equal partner with the account manager in briefing the creative departments. In 1968 the London office of J. Walter Thompson established an account planning department. Account planning was

exported to the United States in 1982, when Jay Chiat set up an account planning team. Chiat Day went on to become one of the most successful agencies in the eighties, growing its billings from fifty million dollars to seven hundred million dollars in ten years. Many US creative shops followed suit.

In the nineties, account planning grew exponentially, and today has become a mainstay function in creative agencies. Jeff Goodby of Goodby Silverstein and Partners reinforced the importance of account planning when he said that "everything an agency does should be geared towards getting into peoples' heads to figure out what they currently think and how best to influence them."[2]

The primary responsibility of account planners is to understand the target audience and to be its ambassador throughout the ad development process. Insights have become an important element in developing creative work. They help creative agencies decide what to say in advertising and help the agency creative people develop ideas and ads that connect with their targets.

CONSUMER INSIGHT: THE ACCOUNT PLANNER
VERSUS THE COMMUNICATIONS PLANNER

A question I often get is, "What is the difference between the consumer insights of the creative agency account planners and those of the media agency communications planner?" Often the line between them blurs.

Both approach gathering insight in similar ways. They're looking for qualitative research techniques that provide an unstructured environment and opportunities for revealing insights into the more emotional aspects of a brand. They both use traditional one-on-one approaches such as interviews and focus groups, as well as more creative approaches such as accompanied shopping, word associations, use of visual prompts, video montages, projective techniques, and consumer diaries. Both types of planners may also seek quantitative, behavioral, and attitudinal data from long-term studies to uncover social and cultural changes. They use primary and secondary research sources such as published market reports, usage and attitude surveys, and awareness-tracking studies.

Derek Morris, chief operating officer for VivaKi UK, who has run both communications planning and account planning departments, said to me once that creative agencies are generally much better at developing insights than their media agency planning counterparts: "They've been doing it longer, have more resources and [have] built more time into their planning process." Media agency planners would do well to learn from them.

The difference between the two, however, is that account planning is looking for insight to help the creative teams determine what to say. They want to understand what's going on in consumers' lives so they can say, "This is what the brand stands for" or "This is why it's different" and "This is why consumers should choose it." A communications planner is focused on insight that can help determine how and where to say those things. The key question to keep asking when developing the Brand Media Strategy is, "how are people going to be more engaged with the communications?"

As an illustration of the difference between account planning insight and communications planning insight, Chris Pyne, my agency's former New York head of planning, cites interviews he and the creative agency's account planning director for L'Oréal conducted with beauty editors from Hearst Magazines. The purpose was to better understand how they could develop communications for Garnier beauty products. The creative agency account planner asked the editors, "What do you see as the difference between French and American women when it comes to beauty products?", while Chris asked, "What are you doing to get people to read or engage with your editorial?" Contrast these questions with what a traditional media planner might have asked: "Who reads the magazine?" The communications planner's and the account planning director's questions created valuable insight into how to communicate.

Account planning and communications planning roles can and should be a team effort, often with much crossover. The client might ask whether they are paying twice for both, but if you don't have crossover, you don't get integration. The enemy of integration is silos in which people keep to their own spaces.

Sometimes an account planner's consumer work can set the agenda for the media strategy. For example, the global campaign conducted by the

bank HSBC uncovered the importance that international business people place on local market knowledge. The campaign developed by Lowe & Partners Worldwide promoted HSBC as "the world's local bank," by depicting the differences in countries' interpretations of certain topics. The original launch ad, "Football," displayed versions of footballs from the United States, England, and Australia. My agency planned this campaign with HSBC and Lowe, and we translated the creative campaign into the now famous international airport program. We reinforced the idea of local knowledge by placing ads inside flight boarding walkways, where international passengers would view them. This component of the media campaign proved hugely successful.

Insights into media use can be very important and influential in the creative strategy. For example, the planning agency that developed Unilever's campaign for Dove discovered that 80 percent of women feel worse about themselves after reading a women's magazine. From that they developed the "Campaign for Real Beauty" and advertising that depicted real women of all sizes, shapes, and ages.

That's where communications is becoming more interesting and the reason why there's a need for more collaboration among the planning teams at the different agency disciplines. Where I've found communications planning to really work well is when it informs or adds to the creative insight process.

For one of our large clients at Mindshare our account team had worked out with the creative and digital agencies appropriate "swim lanes." They were essentially areas to keep media, digital, and creative from tripping over each other. Sadly, it has become common place for agencies to battle over turf that gets in the way of collaboration. But I've always found that most communications planners and account planners care less about politics and more about the work. They want to be collaborative and are more open to working in tandem. We had a consumer-packaged-goods client with an interesting process for facilitating collaboration. The brand chairs a meeting at which creative, media, and digital planners co-develop a campaign strategy. Their only rule is that no one in account management is allowed to participate!

Memo to chief marketing officers and agency account management: put all the planners together in one room and you will get a better and more insightful product.

A MORE COMPLEX AND VARIED CONSUMER

Peter Francese, a demographics trends analyst, believes "the concept of an 'average American' is gone, probably forever. The average American has been replaced by a complex, multidimensional society that defies simplistic labeling," he writes.[3]

The message to marketers is clear: no single demographic, or even handful of demographics, neatly defines the nation. There is no such thing as "the average American consumer." Francese highlights that the 2010 census reveals that the classic American family—married couple[s] with children—accounts for only 22 percent of households.

Francese went on to state the most widespread type of US household is a married couple without children, followed closely by single-person households. The diversity of consumers presents boundless opportunities for marketers and media to develop strategies for how they target and segment households.

MICROTRENDING

Mark Penn is the former chief executive officer of the global communications firm Burson-Marsteller and president of Penn, Schoen and Berland, a market research firm. He has advised both former president Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton in her 2008 presidential run, as well as former British prime minister Tony Blair and former Microsoft chief executive officer Bill Gates. As President Clinton's pollster in his 1996 reelection campaign, Penn identified the microtrend of soccer moms and their importance to the campaign.

Penn argues that small groups of people who share an intense choice or preference that is often counterintuitive have been undercounted or missed by companies, marketers, policymakers, and others. A microtrend

can be created by as few as three million people, or about 1 percent of the US population. Even if that group doesn't grow, it can still have enormous impact on society.[4]

The importance of connecting with these groups is huge. One group identified by Penn is moms over 45 who play computer games. They are the fastest-growing group of gamers, but hardly a group normally targeted by gaming companies. Nintendo targeted this group in its launch of the interactive Wii. They set up Wii parties for the "alpha moms," a target segment of socially connected households in several major markets, and ran print advertorials illustrating how playing Wii could improve a mom's family time.[5]

More dynamic customer and media data in combination with tightly targeted long-tail media have helped make it more feasible and economical to identify and market to these microtargets. Microtargeting through programmatic audience buying digital networks gives brands the ability to focus on their markets with specific messaging, helping marketers mine user data to find the specific content viewed and create behavioral profiles. Addressable television, digital out of home, and Internet radio are bringing microtargeting opportunities across all media. And we're starting to see personally addressed billboards that respond to mobile phone signals. Remember the scene from the film *Minority Report,* in which Tom Cruise is greeted with personally targeted ads? That doesn't seem so futuristic anymore.

Penn explains that people should care about microtrends "because they are the new driving force behind our society and our future. Our society is blessed with unprecedented choices and people are expressing those choices in ways that create new markets, new affinity groups, and new movements. And if you are relying on conventional wisdom to find them, you will be left behind because CW [conventional wisdom] is a lagging indicator not a leading one."[6]

COMING UP WITH INSIGHTS

Developing insights can be a challenge for planners. There are as many techniques to develop insights as there are planners. Let me try to open this black box a little.

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?

Look for clues about when, where, and how consumers can be influenced, and have relevant, motivating, valuable brand experience. We are trying to build strategic platforms or big ideas to communicate based on consumer insight.

THE INSIGHT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Consumer insights can come to you while in a supermarket aisle, as part of a chance conversation with a customer service manager, or from a newspaper article. Agencies use many techniques to gather observations. Techniques come in and out of vogue. For example, I am definitely seeing a movement away from the traditional focus group. Observation techniques such as ethnographic studies and online monitoring have become the order of the day. Since insights can come from anywhere, you need to start by casting the net wide. The skill is to ask probing and thoughtful questions. There are a ton of sources and techniques to trawl.

The Brand Media Strategy Insight Development Process (Figure 5.2) is a six-stage process that my agency uses to develop hypotheses to test, quantify, and validate. The hypotheses are developed out of points of view that come from conversations, observations, and discovery. Coming up with a hypothesis and then testing it is a proven approach. It's very difficult

FIGURE 5.2

to directly ask consumers what they want; they aren't marketing experts. As legendary marketer and Apple chief executive officer Steve Jobs once said, "A lot of times, people don't know what they want until you show it to them."[7]

QUESTIONS THAT CAN UNCOVER BRAND MEDIA INSIGHTS

The insight process has five important questions to ask.

What types of contexts make the messaging more relevant to consumers?
I like to refer to this as the receptivity insight: the context or media environments that help the communications be more influential or effective in conveying the brand message. Which media experiences influence branding and which drive behavior?

Different combinations of touch points or media impact consumers differently. Newspaper and radio can be strong at driving response. Search can drive traffic. Video helps influence the brand. They all bring value and options for a planner. Gaining insight into their impact in relation to the communication goals is important for a planner to determine.

What marketing efforts are our customers noticing?
Do they attribute them to the correct brands?
Insight into the brand category and how the brands use communications tells you how the Brand Media Strategy can differentiate the brand.

What motivates people to be brand evangelists or
share brand content with other consumers?
Creating brand conversations, discussed in chapter 6, relies on finding cultural factors, elements in the brand category, and characteristics of the brand sharers that give the communications more legs.

What's the propensity that propels my customers toward my brand
or category?
Most insights center on the consumer, but we need to know how the insights relate to the specific brand category and customers we target.

APPROACHES ON GATHERING INSIGHT

Of the techniques listed here, many I learned from creative shops, some from clients and design agencies, and some we developed with our communication planning teams.

Some simple things can be done from your desk. Better still is getting out and talking to people. Being interested in people is a prerequisite to being a communications planner. There are quantitative ways of gathering insights from surveys, trackers, household panels, and product tests. Qualitative methods might involve examining perceptions or emotions, doing ethnographic research, or simply observing what people do.

CAST THE NET WIDE

Insights don't have to be centered only on the consumer. They can be about products, or the cultural environment or the market in general (Figure 5.3).

FIGURE 5.3   SOURCE OF INSIGHTS
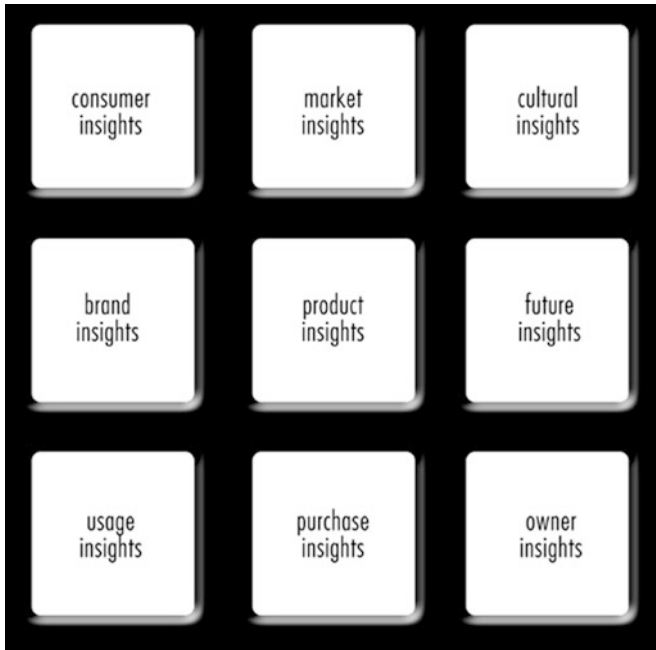
CULTURAL TRENDS

Cultural trends can create brand communication opportunities for brands. When five teenagers from Australia created a short video of themselves dancing to Harlem Shake by electronic musician Baauer, it became a cultural sensation. Within a week and a half, around 12,000 "Harlem Shake" videos had been posted on YouTube.[8] Viewership of the videos hit a billion views within 40 days.[9] Pepsi jumped on this phenomenon within a few days, producing their own version with Nascar driver Jeff Gordon that itself went viral.

After the recession in 2009, there was a resurgence of "buy American," which led to marketers like Chrysler producing anthem stirring television commercials and Walmart promoting that they would commit to increasing the sourcing of American manufactured items.

TALK TO EXPERTS

Before you talk to consumers, speak to people who know the business. For example, tap the people who work for a trade body or association, editors of trade or consumer publications, frontline salespeople and account managers, suppliers to the brand, bloggers on the subject, or retailers. British ad agency HHCL, working for the UK Automobile Association, spoke to association phone operators and found that members talked about how friendly the AA repairmen were.

Tap into the collective knowledge inside the client's company. Draw on the experience and judgment of people in the business by interviewing the client company's sales force, service departments, and retailers who deal with the end customers. Retailers think about the business all day. They see what customers are actually doing, rather than what they say. They observe why people don't buy the product. They can also steer you in a direction to probe further.

LOOK AT WHAT PEOPLE DO, NOT WHAT THEY SAY

Observation is a powerful technique for developing consumer understanding. Here are a handful of helpful approaches.

Michael Harvey, global consumer planning director at beverage giant Diageo, offers this advice: "Observing consumer behaviour in the on and off-trade: getting out and watching people in-situ is free and a great source of insight."[10]

HIT THE STREETS

Nike used street teams to listen to urban tastemakers under the guidance of urban marketer Come Chantrel. Chantrel took the techniques he had used for marketing and pretesting music at Loud Records and put them to work for the sneaker company on the street, with resounding success.

Nike is still using this process. Having failed in the skateboard sneaker market with a flashy ad campaign, Nike succeeded by listening to a panel of respected skaters. Now, it sells the shoe line only in independent skate shops, advertises only in skateboard magazines, and offers sponsorships to carefully chosen skaters. By listening before it speaks, it has achieved the delicate art of being cool without trying too hard.

JOURNALING

Tom Neveril, president of Storybrand Consulting, a market intelligence firm in Santa Monica, California, advocates journaling.

He asks interviewees to fill in calendar pages for every half hour of their activities and their train of thought during those times. He explains that the entries should be made near the time of the experience and aimed at capturing the memories of the customer experience, like car shopping. He dubs this approach "Outlook calendar journaling." Neveril also suggests conducting ethnographic research, in which people are observed in their natural environment going about their everyday activities, whether brushing their teeth or cleaning their kitchen or visiting a car dealership.

"Whether you gather recalled stories, journals or observations of the 'here and now,' you will encounter apparent hypocrisy. That's OK," writes Neveril. "Contradictions can be very revealing. But don't bother pointing it out to the interviewee. That will only cause them to withdraw. And giving someone a reality check would upset the natural order

and meaning that they've created in their lives. And if you want to get to know the real person, you must make them comfortable in their sometimes irrational skin. So if you want to know how your customers will behave in the future, don't ask for more of their opinions. Just take a look at their behavior."[11]

DIGITAL INSIGHTS CAN BE POWERFUL

Using Search to Develop Planning Strategy

My experience is that search data provides an insightful source of consumer behavior for planners.

Keyword data results open up unexpected avenues of thinking because the results are based on actual consumer behavior rather than our assumptions. For example, surveying search patterns on Google tells us when in the holiday retail season consumers start researching items such as perfume. This gives us insight into the right time to plan the scheduling of the advertising. When customers research products, they are more receptive to the communications.

Keyword data suffers none of the downsides of conventional research such as research effect, because all of the behavior is natural and results can be manipulated and furthered to meet your needs. The results can be constantly updated, without continually commissioning new rounds of research.

Keywords as the Stimulus for the Planning Strategy

When used appropriately, search tools are a strategic weapon for brands and marketers. Because search is at the bottom of the buying funnel, it provides valuable insight into the effectiveness of other brand-building channels. You can better understand the efficiencies of TV, print, sponsorships, and other activities by analyzing how changes in spending in those channels are reflected in search behaviors.

When we analyzed a paid-search campaign for Cartier, we came across an interesting insight. Although we used different combinations of branded search phrases, such as "engagement rings," "watches," and "jewelry," we found that once people clicked through to the brand's website, they would check out nearly all the product lines. This led us to consider

whether the client should continue to support product advertising or focus on promoting the brand or the product range.

Listening Online

One of the best types of consumer research that you can do at your desk is tracking conversations online to understand what people are saying and thinking about a brand or category.

Jason Kilar, when he was the chief executive officer of Hulu, claimed he sometimes checked Twitter 20 times a day. There are 2,400 Hulu-related tweets a day. "It's a transparent engine," he observed. "I've always said that our brand is what people say about us when we're not in the room and this is the best tool for hearing what people are saying."[12]

Beauty giant L'Oréal conducted research that involved listening to what women were saying to each other about hair coloring. It found that women don't talk about vitamin B_{12} strengtheners with their friends. They'd rather talk about "What my hair will look like in that color." That insight led L'Oréal to create the swatch flip pad, in which women pull a small tuft of hair through the pad to see what their hair color looks like in different L'Oréal shades. Over 85 percent of the women who received the swatch flip pad talked about it with five or more friends.[13]

BMW's Mini division hired listening vendor MotiveQuest to mine online conversation data and found that Mini owners "view their cars as a blank canvas onto which they could project their personality."[14] The firm then worked with their agency to develop a campaign that included personalized messages to drivers via digital billboards based on digital identification chips in their cars. MotiveQuest then used its Online Promoter Score methodology to track how many people recommended the brand to others online. They found that the score could predict sales impact one month out.

MEDIA CONSUMER INSIGHTS

I believe that insights derived from how consumers are using media can drive incredibly influential communications. We've talked to editors of women's magazines to understand how they address women about today's

fashion and beauty. We scour the *Wall Street Journal* or the *Financial Times* to better understand what's keeping chief executive officers up at night. Similarly, Wired.com has rich insight into whether new products have support from tech opinion leaders.

How the Millennial generation interacts with social media provides a source for ideas of how brands can interact with them. For example, when Estee Lauder saw how Facebook was becoming an important social currency for young women, they photographed in-store makeovers so that young women could post them to their profile pages on social network sites.

Social media insights reveal how consumers interact with brands, other consumers, and social media. Burger King conducted a campaign based on a social insight: as a collection of digital friendships grew, each friend was less valuable. Their tagline was "Friendship is strong but the Whopper is stronger," and the campaign rewarded customers for axing friends from social networks.

MTV revamps its schedule from top to bottom every few years, as the MTV generation is constantly evolving. The MTV generation, once Generation X, has shifted to Generation Y. At a program presentation MTV made to advertisers and agencies, the company told advertisers, "MTV doesn't try to reflect the latest trends; they are trying to anticipate them."[15] Therefore its programs—irreverent reality dramas, documentaries covering social issues such as cyber bullying, 20-something directors reporting on authentic stories—capture a consumer hugely interesting to advertisers.

WHICH TARGET DO WE FOCUS ON?

The question for many planners is which type of user to focus on: a current user or a heavy user, a potential user or an influential user, a purchaser or a gatekeeper. There's no single answer here, because every category, brand, and campaign requires something different.

Often the brand manager will take the lead and have ideas about whom to target. Brand managers likely have their own data and insights to share. That's a good place to start. But it never hurts to challenge the target.

Mass media thinking leans toward *maximizing audience reach* in the hopes of generating more sales. But specific brands aren't and never will be bought by everyone, far from it, so this strategy leads to inefficient spending.

Consumer-packaged-goods marketing tends to target the household shopper. This group is broad, usually too broad, making it more difficult to gain a penetrating or discerning insight.

An adage in our business says that 80 percent of a brand is bought by 20 percent of the public, but a study showed that a much smaller number accounted for the vast majority of sales for the average packaged-goods brand.[16] A survey of 1,364 consumer-packaged-goods brands in 23,000 stores and 54 million homes found that only 2.5 percent, or one in forty people, account for 80 percent of the average brand's sales. These are the loyal customers who return time and again to buy the products they favor—the core customers. Using existing proprietary research and a little arithmetic, it is easy to identify the size or character of the core group for any brand. Repeat purchase from existing high-volume customers is an important strategy.

Trying to target everyone is unlikely to bring success. Chase one primary audience and maybe a secondary audience. Ask, What is the 20 percent, or 10 percent, that represents the biggest chunk of profitable business? Then ask, Which part of the consumer pathway are we trying to shift? Is this campaign about awareness or getting on the shopping list? Some brands have had success focusing on the 20 percent of the customer base that represents the heaviest user. For Denny's we focused on the breakfast superfan; for sports drink Lucozade Sport they targeted the serious athlete.

Decide whether the campaign is intended to support the brand or reposition the brand. Are there factors inhibiting the brand's growth? Quantify the group of users that has the greatest impact on sales. Ask yourself which target will be more influenced by advertising/communications. When I worked on the Coca-Cola account, most of the drink was sold to household shoppers who purchased it in two-liter bottles at supermarkets. But Coke focused their media on teens because they figured they couldn't afford to target everyone. They knew that being relevant to teens was more important in establishing long-term brand loyalty and value.

GATHERING AND FILTERING INSIGHTS

It's relatively easy to have many insights. It's so much harder to have one or two really powerful ones to hang your strategy on.

So you collect and collate a stack of cultural trends, media trends, category trends, attitudes, usage, and communications receptivity insights. The next step is to filter and screen them. Stick them on a wall—literally. And then subject them to the following questions, tossing aside the ones that fail to meet the test. It's a brutal but telling process.

Is the insight fresh or bold or new?

Is the insight something that makes everybody on the team think differently about the brand or how to communicate? If it does, then it will help differentiate the brand strategy and be more competitive.

Dove's "Campaign for Real Beauty" uncovered the insight that women were tired of fake images of beauty. They wanted to take good care of the body they had, make the most of the "real me." This went well beyond women's views of functional product use and into emotional territory. Amplifying this perspective of beauty hadn't ever been articulated in the category.

Is the insight a discovery about your consumer
that opens the door for your brand?

Many so-called insights in marketing are really observations. They don't open the door to an opportunity, because they don't go deep enough. To get a true nugget of insight, you need to dig deeper and keep asking Why, like an inquisitive toddler, till you hit gold. While working on a campaign for a bath oil product for Unilever, Mindshare planners found that American women preferred a quick morning shower and European women preferred to unwind with a bath at night. If Unilever could persuade more American women to take some time for themselves at the end of the day, they could sell more Dove Cream Oil.

Can it travel?

A truly good insight has the ability to be executed in many different media. If you find it difficult to translate the idea into an immediate

media campaign, then it probably isn't going to fly. A great insight should allow multiple executions, or at least a starting point for the communications plan. Take Folgers Coffee, for example. We used to all think that the ability to brew a good cup of coffee for our annoyingly picky friends was an effective measure of our self-worth. But then the people at Folgers uncovered a simple, obvious, but nevertheless earth-shattering, insight: coffee is mostly about waking up, and we wake up to the smell of the coffee before we take a sip. This insight drove their tagline: "Coffee that matches your morning mood" and dozens of different activation ideas and helped take the business from a 17 percent market share to 36 percent.

Does the insight influence product use or purchase?

The insight must have relevance to what's happening in people's lives, and it must connect to a product. The insight with our client T-Mobile was that 68 percent of all mobile phone calls were made to five people, so they developed a product that gave unlimited calls to five people, which we helped promote with the line "Who's in your fave five?"

Does the insight tell how to make the messaging more engaging?

Message placement can make the messaging more engaging. For example, television coverage of cycling often includes aerial shots. Nike thought these were a media opportunity and chalked the roads with messages of support. The messages got the attention of riders, and of television viewers when the messages were caught on camera by helicopters.

TESTING THE INSIGHT

Once you have three to four insights that can be translated into a hypothesis about ways to communicate, test them. This is where quantitative research comes in. Which insight has the most resonance? What is the scale of the insight; how many consumers respond to it? Test it across different markets, so you have more than a Northeast or West Coast perspective, and then ask, How differentiating is it?

QUESTIONS TO ASK IN THE INSIGHT GATHERING STAGE

1. What places can you look for insights?
2. How can insights help you decide how to communicate to consumers?
3. What questions need to be asked?
4. Whom do we target?
5. Can this insight help us influence the consumer to purchase?

1 + 1 = 3

SPARKING CONSUMER BRAND CONVERSATIONS THROUGH MEDIA

THE POWER OF FREE

Ironically, as a media agency whose business model largely depends on buying media, my agency has invested millions of dollars in trying to understand and measure the value of nonpaid media. We understand that advertising is just one contributor to building brands. There are plenty of others. Today, the relevance and importance of word of mouth has a greater than ever proportion of the mix.

Brand Media Strategy in the mass media age used to be about managing your paid media communications. Thanks to the likes of Facebook, Google, and any number of other digital methods of sharing information, earned media and content creation have become integral parts of the communications mix and strategy.

Prompting and influencing consumer conversations can build new brands and promote existing ones. Everyone in the marketing business, whether in politics or packaged goods, is taking note. Thinking outside the box of traditional mass media is a given in this business, and one of the areas where that thinking is useful is in generating consumer conversations to amplify the brand. But the choice is not between paid or earned media.

Advertising and word of mouth can drive each other and enhance the overall effect. This chapter is dedicated to promoting such a view; hence, the title, 1 + 1 = 3.

One of the most revealing findings of ZenithOptimedia's research of consumer touch points was that purchase is influenced most strongly by friends and family, followed by after-sales service, colleague recommendations and specialist recommendations.

For those wondering how much traditional media influences purchasing, Figure 6.1 shows that television advertising ranked 16th and print advertising 20th.

FIGURE 6.1

Top-Twenty Most Influential Touch Points on Purchase

1. Friends & family recommendations
2. After-sales service
3. Colleague recommendation
4. Specialist recommendation
5. Personal use of brand
6. Brand received as a gift from a friend
7. In-store product tester/sampler
8. Comparison websites
9. Seeing others with brand
10. Expert recommendations
11. Independent reviews
12. Free gift with purchase
13. Packaging
14. Sales brochures/retailer catalogues
15. Salesperson recommendation
16. TV advertising
17. Internet search
18. Loyalty schemes
19. Brand websites
20. Print articles

Source: ZenithOptimedia Global Touchpoints ROI Tracker database.

When the ad world was driven by the mass media, word-of-mouth or marketing PR was a separate line item on the marketing plan. However, word of mouth has such great influence in brand decision making that we have to consider how media can drive it.

WORD OF MOUTH DRIVES SALES

Tremor, a word-of-mouth organization formed by Procter & Gamble, found three reasons why consumer advocacy is important to driving sales.[1]

1. Word of mouth instills confidence: Many recommendations come from people you know, which reduces the emotional risk of following a recommendation.
2. A personal stake: Nothing creates loyalty like advocacy. It's a lesson straight from cognitive psychology. It means that the simple act of recommending a product gives the recommender a personal stake in its success and more reason to remain a loyal user—and continued advocate.
3. Increased perceived value: It's a simple equation. A person who advocates on behalf of a product becomes more appreciative of the product. This strengthening of perceived value translates into increased trial and loyalty.

Similarly, word of mouth drives awareness. A survey from Kantar Media showed that an advertising campaign's awareness among those who had generated or received brand word of mouth was 200 percent higher than among those who had not generated any word of mouth. As more and more brands crowd into the marketplace, consumers must navigate myriad choices and advertising message clutter. They turn to the Internet for advice and insight.

WORD OF MOUSE

To understand the increasing importance of word of mouth in the media mix, you have to understand the effect the Internet is having on personal

recommendation. Mainstream adoption of the Internet has increasingly enabled word of mouth's role in brand decisions.

Thanks to Google and myriad other online venues, "word of mouse" has real scale. With search, consumers can find content and information more easily and more efficiently than ever, and the Web is alive with millions of conversations and comments on brands disseminated via social media. On Facebook alone, 4.75 billion pieces of content (web links, news stories, blog posts, notes, and photos) are shared every day.[2] There are over a billion users who visit YouTube every day.[3] Video content, much of it on brands, is being created and disseminated by consumers, and the prospects for going viral excite marketers.

THE POWER OF USER RATINGS

Those millions of web users aren't just listening to friends; they're relying on total strangers to help them make brand choices. Product ratings have enormous sway over brand choice. Think about how many people use TripAdvisor to help them select a hotel in a city or even a particular room. The Hilton San Francisco offers guests who provide feedback to TripAdvisor free Starbucks cards, a gesture they hope will prompt a positive response. In fact, the travel industry has been turned on its head by user-generated content. Traditional standards, such as what constitutes a four-star hotel, are now determined by the public. Professional guidebooks are passé.

Marketing expert Seth Godin points out, "For the first time in history, the graffiti on the wall has more power than the official version coming from an organization (even yours)."[4] What other people say is more important than what companies say. Companies can provide information on their products, but Amazon's users will leave their own feedback. Target and Best Buy have thrown open the door for consumers to share their thoughts in forums. Consumers even provide advice on how to get the most out of these companies' products—crowd sourcing at its best. Restaurant-review publisher Zagats was one of the first companies to harness user-generated content and share it through its annually produced books.

The amplification of the consumer voice, independent of either the media filter or the company PR department, has led to fierce internal debate at some companies about how much to let go, how much free rein to give users to have their say. Frito-Lay's Doritos believed the answer was to involve customers, who in turn sent great ideas that were later turned into a Super Bowl commercial.

Frank Rose, in an article in the *Wall Street Journal,* described it as "the Internet . . . arm[ing] the consumer against the mindless blather of corporate messaging attempts."[5] Bloggers aren't paid to fill space; they're passionate about their topics, and they drive an honest dialogue. In some ways they have flipped the purchase funnel. Consumers can join in any web conversation about brands simply by Googling the topic.

Seth Godin observed that Google has sliced and diced information about the world into tiny bits. Very few people visit a website home page anymore. They walk in the back door, the page that Google has sent them to. By atomizing the world, Google destroyed the end-to-end solution offered by most organizations, replacing it with a pick-and-choose, component-based solution. In short, they have democratized product information.[6]

ADVERTISING PROMOTES WORD OF MOUTH

Research by the Keller Fay Group found that a stunning 3.3 billion word-of-mouth brand mentions take place in the United States each day.[7] Ninety-four percent of word of mouth takes place offline.[8] Notably, 65 percent of brand references are positive and 8 percent negative. Looking at that statistic from a marketer's perspective, it's hard to see any downside in promoting word of mouth online. The risk is low and the upside is high. According to Keller Fay's statistics, 57 percent rated word of mouth as credible or believable and 49 percent were likely to pass on information. Advertising in traditional media has a huge role in driving word of mouth. The company found that 22 percent of daily conversations about brands, or 716 million, involves someone talking about what they've seen or heard in paid media. In fact, the group says this is a conservative estimate of advertising's role because it counts only conversations in which ads were

specifically mentioned. So it would not account for occasions when a consumer was indirectly or unconsciously motivated by an ad in a conversation about a product or service.

These findings are important, because in most research I've found that consumers don't like to admit that they're influenced by advertising. Much of the enthusiasm for word of mouth, as a communication discipline that can be molded, stems from its being more likely to be viewed as authentic and stimulated by real experience. That in itself is more valuable than paid commercial messaging.

With 22 percent of word of mouth driven by advertising and 13 percent driven by editorial content, we see that the media is playing a bigger role in driving word of mouth.[9]

WHO ARE THE INFLUENCERS?

One question marketers and agencies must ask is, Who are the influencers? The Word of Mouth Marketing Association (WOMMA) identified five broad categories of influencers (Figure 6.2).[10]

FIGURE 6.2

Five Types of Influencers			
Category	Who They Are	Channels of Influence	What They Are Called (partial list)
Formal position of authority	Political/government leaders and staff; business leaders	Laws and regulations; decision and spending authority; top-down directives	Opinion leaders; decision makers; business elite
Institutional/recognized subject matter experts and advocates	Academics/scientists; industry analysts; NGO leaders; consumer activists	Academic journals; traditional media; new media; social media	Experts; mavens; analysts; critics
Media elite	Journalists; commentators; talk show hosts	Traditional media; new media; social media	Talking heads; columnists; politicos
Cultural elite	Celebrities; designers; artists; musicians	Traditional media; new media; new styles/products; social media	Trendsetters; fashionistas; taste makers; creators; starters
Socially connected	Neighborhood leaders; members of community groups; online networkers; business networkers	Personal relationships; email lists; social gatherings; social networking websites; social media	Mavens; starters; connectors; soccer moms; spreaders; hubs; alpha moms

Note: NGO, nongovernmental organization.

Source: WOMMA Influencer Handbook

BUSINESS DECISION-MAKERS AND OPINION LEADERS

The viewpoint of those in formal positions of authority—political leaders or business elite, the so-called C suite, or C level—carries weight, if not final decision-making, particularly on B2B products or services. But their influence also extends to credibility outside their own organizations.

RECOGNIZED EXPERTS AND ANALYSTS

Experts include academics, industry commentators, and technical experts, people whose jobs or reputations in a specialist field put them in a position to influence others. Seth Godin is my guru on many things marketing.

MEDIA ELITE

Journalists, media commentators, even talk show hosts who have an audience in traditional, new, or social media are the media elite. Oprah Winfrey, with her superpowers in selling books or safe driving or anything else she wants, epitomizes the type.

CULTURAL ELITE

Celebrities, trendsetters, or fashionistas influence through their connections to pop culture and societal trends. This group is followed by early adopters and by the media. They need not necessarily be experts in a field, but they have general influence; one such is Michelle Obama.

SOCIALLY CONNECTED

Malcolm Gladwell called them mavens: everyday influencers among our family and friends—the most influential touch point.[11] They have more power than Oprah or Michelle because of their sheer numbers. They are researchers who are always on the lookout for new information and ideas. They volunteer their opinions about products and services they

are passionate about. They are the social oil of any group, the ones with five-hundred-plus friends on Facebook who constantly socialize off- and online.

A study by ICOM, a division of direct marketing agency Epsilon, found that there is no universal influencer and that consumers are influencers strictly within product categories rather than across all categories. In addition, few commonalities exist within demographics for influencers.[12]

Each of the groups of influencers has a different role and level of importance among individual brand briefs. Each requires a different strategy. The first step is to identify and prioritize the important groups in any influencer outreach, and what you want to achieve with them, before determining tactics. We go into specifics later in this chapter in "Generating Brand Conversation Tactics."

EARLY ADOPTERS

When it comes to generating positive word of mouth, early adopters of new products are influential. The early adopters sway the "early majority," a group defined by social scientist Everett Rogers in *Diffusion of Innovations.*[13] The early majority represents 34 percent of consumers and is the group most essential for driving product sales into mainstream volume levels. According to an *Advertising Age* white paper, "Thanks to the rise of social media, early adopters have the potential to have greater influence over products they buy and try."[14]

Taly Weiss, founder and chief executive officer of Trendspotting.com Research, observed that early adopters, in the last five years, have had a stage from which to influence others. She says, "Social media gave them screen power. Early social media users have grown to be the important influencers, and their influence is far beyond technology."[15]

Google has exploited early adopters when developing new products. A limited number of identified early adopters are invited by Google to test beta versions of a product. Word spreads to a growing and connected tech community, who feel they are part of an exclusive club.

Creating conversations among influencers and early adopters brings a high level of involvement for new and existing brands. Opinions of friends and family, and even of strangers, carry more weight than company-provided information, as they are seen as independent and authentic. Social media enables the spread of these opinions and discussions across a wider audience. Google and other search engines have given consumers the ability to solicit those opinions, making word of mouth more penetrating. All of this at Internet speed. Building consumer conversations into the Brand Media Strategy has become a crucial element to delivering the full arsenal of paid and unpaid media communications.

TACTICS FOR GENERATING BRAND CONVERSATION

The job of the communications planner in conjunction with the marketer is to find ways to tap into those influencers and early adopters. The key tactics to keep in mind are the following:

- Start by listening.
- Talk to the talkers.
- Conversations start with an idea.
- Make it worthwhile to share.
- Amplify the conversation in paid media.
- Budget for production and ideas.
- Measure sensibly.

START BY LISTENING

As a kid I used to watch a famous British television talk show host, Michael Parkinson. He had the most engaging interviews with guests. He was renowned for not talking but listening, and he seemed to always get his guests to reveal their innermost thoughts and feelings, creating fascinating conversations. During the seventies he attracted big-name Hollywood stars such as Jimmy Stewart, John Wayne, and Mickey Rooney. He didn't invite them to talk about a movie but to simply chat. In one episode,

Tony Blair, the first prime minister in office to be interviewed on the show, told of his wife's father asking him if he could light a marijuana joint.

The most effective way to start a conversation is to listen. Listening can provide insight into pop culture, provide unedited thoughts about brands and what people think, in real time. There are many ways to listen. A good place for a planner to start is to set up a Google Alert for your brand and key business terms. You might want to also set up alerts to track the competition. Then analyze conversations. What are people saying? Who's saying it, how often, and where and in which communities? Are views positive or negative?

Search engines have a hard time picking up commentary on chat boards, so it's important to look for forums in such places as Chow.com if you're in the restaurant business or Edmunds.com if you're working on an automotive brand. Join Facebook Groups to hear what people are saying about your client's brand. Search on Twitter for real-time conversations happening around specific keywords.

Managing Negative Word of Mouth Online

One of the advantages of listening to the conversation online is the ability to respond.

Pepsi experienced some of the pitfalls of the online medium when an ad appeared in Germany that featured the last calorie of a drink committing suicide. The agency that made the ad had wanted to submit it for an awards program, but never got Pepsi's final sign-off on the ad, so the agency ran the ad just once in a niche arts magazine in Germany. Despite the agency's caution, the copy still turned up on the Web, causing an immediate uproar. "Immediately we jumped in," says Bonin Bough, the then-director of global social media at Pepsi. "We were very clear with the public that the ad will never run again, and here's how it got out; this is what the issue was."[16]

The marketing team also responded individually to all the consumers who were offended and thus helped offset damage. Taking such a transparent, honest approach can even provide "an opportunity to change a badvocate, into a potential advocate," says Bough, as long as communications are authentic and sincere.[17]

Domino's Pizza also had damage control to do after a fake video by renegade employees leaked onto YouTube. Company chief executive officer Patrick Doyle responded within 24 hours with his own video on YouTube.

Twitter's Trending Topics offers a way to monitor the zeitgeist and respond. When someone complains about your brand on the site, a marketer can listen or offer to help the complainer. When Matthew Caldecutt vented his frustrations with AT&T's service on his Twitter feed, AT&T wrote back to him and helped him get a better deal on his service. Caldecutt followed up with a tweet that said the company's rapid response had "turned his ill will into goodwill."[18]

TALK TO THE TALKERS

Engage Your True Fans

Marketing blogger Seth Godin talks about the shift in the conversation from how many to whom. Similarly, the president of the UK's Word of Mouth Marketing Association, Molly Flatt, says, "Your biggest spending customer may not necessarily be your most valuable. It's the one that recommends you the most that is a real asset to your business."[19] And as President Barack Obama can attest, getting fans to convert their peers can turn a campaign into a success.

True word of mouth is most effective when it's generated by independent, peer-to-peer contact. This is the kind of behavior that brands should foster, although it demands an ethical rigor, creativity, and abdication of control that can feel very frightening. Forrester Research concluded that only 16 percent of consumers trust corporate blogs, while 60 percent trust consumer product ratings and reviews.[20]

Employees Are an Advertising Medium

Sergio Zyman suggests that employees are forms of advertising. "There are plenty of times when a TV commercial is the best thing, but there are also a ton of other ways to advertise that don't involve hiring a frustrated and expensive Hollywood director," writes Zyman. "Your packaging, the way you treat your employees, the way they treat your customers, how

your receptionist answers the phone, how your delivery people are dressed. Whether you care to admit it or not, all of these are advertising."[21]

In an era of web transparency, how your employees think and talk about your company has become even more crucial. Mike Kust, chief marketing officer for Carlson Marketing, noted the example of a large commercial bank that had a different message for employees and for its customers. The bank provided employees with incentives to work more quickly and more efficiently, while its advertising stressed the warmth and care and extra time it gave its customers. "The whole project ended up a failure," he said.[22]

Eric Ryan, founder of the company that makes the cleaning product Method, says an employee is a spokesperson. "We blur the lines between who we are and who we serve," he says.[23] Think of your human resources director as a marketing director.

Pepsi recognized the importance of bringing its employees along, launching "invertising" for its "Refresh Everything" campaign, aimed at employees. The company placed posters, floor and elevator decals, and placards in the head office in Purchase, New York. The beverage giant conducted ten webinars for its employees and bottlers that introduced the new messaging. The company also explained the plans in the company newsletter and on its intranet.

CONVERSATIONS START WITH AN IDEA

Whether you are developing campaigns that drive conversations in social or in traditional media, you need to start with an idea, a hook, something that is worth talking about and sharing. This isn't just about a media plan. Developing consumer-driven communications absolutely relies on collaborating and partnering with PR and creative or digital agencies.

To develop brand conversation ideas, planners need to do the following:

- Look for insights that could trigger effective consumer advocacy or conversations about the brand or campaign. These could come from observations of what consumers think of the brand or category in particular or from the culture in general.

CASE STUDY: *THE DARK KNIGHT*—
ENGAGING YOUR TRUE FANS

Warner Bros. showed a lot of deftness in creating buzz behind *The Dark Knight* film by launching its viral marketing campaign online. The campaign launched a year before the release. They developed an elaborate Batman universe that entailed a series of interactive experiences, competitions, and story builds, including more than 30 different *Dark Knight* websites. *Dark Knight* fans who went to WhySoSerious.com found themselves invited to a scavenger-hunt challenge with instructions that sent them to bakeries in 25 different US cities. After asking for an order left for "Robin Banks" ("robbing banks"), they were given a cake with a phone number written on it. Inside the cake was an evidence bag that contained a cellphone and a Joker playing card with more clues.

There was a website of the fictional newspaper *The Gotham Times,* a site for Gotham City's district attorney, Harvey Dent, suitably defaced by the Joker, and even a site for the subway map of Gotham City. These sites were not promoted through traditional media channels. They leaked information about them, to allow true fans to search for them and let their friends know. The film opened with a record number of screens and a record box office of $158.4 million on opening weekend in the United States.[24]

The campaign delivered some impressive numbers, helped by the buzz driven by this effort: fifty million Google searches for "The Dark Knight."[25] There were fifty-five thousand videos on YouTube tagged "The Dark Knight," with some receiving over four million views and generating hundreds of thousands of comments. There were 106,299 blog posts on the launch day of the film. More than 4 million websites referred to "The Dark Knight," ranging from film critics to social networks and new forums. This was a unique campaign that truly engaged the fans and drove a massive outcome.

- Brainstorm a single message around something that is relevant and differentiating. Is there an idea that will surprise consumers or challenge their current thinking about the brand? What is the psychological, social, or cultural tension associated with this idea? What makes your target person tense about the idea? Then test the idea by asking whether she would want to share it with those she knows.

FOSTER CHICKENS—SAY NO TO PLUMPING

Foster Farms, in Livingston, California, launched a campaign that caught my eye.[26] The company sells high-quality chicken in supermarkets. Faced with the effect of lower-priced store brands on their sales, they came up with a brilliant idea that challenged their current approach to purchase consideration by bringing to light the practices of lower-priced competitor products. They did this by creating an issue-based campaign to "Say no to plumping."

Plumping, a word invented by Foster Farms, describes the practice, largely unknown to consumers, of filling chickens with saltwater to make them heavier. The heavier the chicken, the more you pay. Foster Farms wanted to explain why its chickens were worth the money.

Foster Farms, together with design consultancy Welikesmall and ad agency Goodby, Silverstein & Partners, San Francisco, California, designed a website to discuss the evils of the practice. A YouTube ad spot shows a shady surgeon injecting chicken characters who don't understand what's going on. The antiplumping campaign had its own website, Twitter address, and Facebook page. The idea sparked so much interest that even California senator Barbara Boxer got involved to suggest that producers label chickens that have been injected with saltwater.[27]

Another technique is to create an event worth talking about, and publish, broadcast, and promote it in paid and earned media platforms to help drive conversations. John Woodward, in charge of global planning at Publicis, advocates creating what he calls "contagious ideas that change the conversation."[28]

For New Zealand beer Speights, their idea was to sponsor an event and then PR and promote it. The agency built a Speights ale house on a ship that made a ten-week voyage to London, where it then served expat Kiwis who missed their favorite drink. Footage of the voyage was sent to websites, the media, and television. The huge media interest generated PR with a value of millions of dollars over several months, a value that was many times the brand's original promotional budget.

MAKE IT WORTH THEIR WHILE TO SHARE

Every PR person knows that giving a journalist an exclusive—a piece of information, a story, or access—will most likely lead to a sense of excitement and a desire to share.

Potato snack Pringles, a Procter & Gamble product, launched a campaign with this idea in mind. Their approach was to share a new product with a group of people who might then go out and spread the word. Pringles distributed a first-to-taste party pack that was sent to networked mothers in advance of a traditional media launch. It invited snack food influencers to have their friends taste and rate the new Rice Infusion brand of Pringles. This produced a flurry of conversations about the product, both on- and offline.

Bloggers love recognition, so give them access to your brands. To bring these influencers into the tent, it's critical to have them interact with the product, rate it, and then talk about it, both positively and negatively. Consumer electronics company Panasonic invited influential bloggers on a trip to the Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas, Nevada, where they mingled with Panasonic's chief executive officer and marketing people. They didn't insist that anyone write about the product, but they did receive plenty of buzz in the end.

UK mobile phone operator O2 gave college students prizes to promote the mobile phone company's unlimited use for a flat rate plan. The big prize was an end-of-term party for the winner's entire university. Some 250 student brand ambassadors were appointed to spread the word face to face and through their social networks. The student awareness of the rate plan doubled, going from 21 percent to 43 percent. The phone company also showed an average increase of 77 percent over all brand attributes among students for the campaign period.

Similarly, Pepsi's Refresh project tapped into consumers' deep desire to do good and to be connected to each other while doing so. "Refresh" aimed to give away millions of dollars to good causes. Those looking for cash to support their initiatives were required to launch a political-like campaign within their on- and offline social networks to get people to vote for their initiative.

Pepsi's project, at www.refresheverything.com, had 1,086 pitches from consumers in categories such as health, arts, food, the planet, neighborhood, and education.[29] Voters could support anything from free crock pots and recipes for the underprivileged to Kindle classrooms for those wanting to learn English.

AMPLIFY THE CONVERSATION IN PAID MEDIA

As mentioned earlier, according to Keller Fay, at least 22 percent of word-of-mouth conversations about brands are generated by advertising. And many of those conversations are positive to the brand. Building in paid media strategies that fuel brand conversations is more essential than ever.

Airline JetBlue is a classic example of how to build a brand on word of mouth. Approximately 70 percent of their customers fly with the airline because someone has recommended JetBlue. The company wanted to amplify the voices of those satisfied customers and set up a story booth. Customers were asked to share their story in person in the booth or online. The JetBlue booth was taken to 11 cities, and over 109,000 people stopped in to talk. The company collected over one thousand video stories and over twelve hundred emails. The stories from the booth formed the basis for a television ad campaign and a 20-minute video shown on planes and in crew member areas to help drive the culture.

The outcome was that travelers gave greater consideration to JetBlue when making flight plans than to rivals such as Southwest, 26 percent versus 23 percent, respectively, for the two airlines. The company's revenue, passenger and miles were up 25 percent.[30]

Super Bowl Has Become the PR Bowl

Ed Keller, chief executive officer of Keller Fay Group, firmly believes that the Super Bowl generates substantially more word of mouth for advertisers than anything else out there. "We generally see that brands which advertise in the Super Bowl are rewarded with a 15% increase in Word of Mouth. . . . This translates into more than 100 million incremental conversations for advertised brands in the week after the game than the average weekly Word of Mouth they were realizing previously." Keller figures that

a word-of-mouth conversation is worth about 50 cents to a marketer and that there's a social value being generated that goes beyond the impact of the ad itself.[31]

This came to life for me when my agency worked with Denny's. In an effort to gain retrial and increase brand consideration, they developed a promotion to invite America to have a Denny's Grand Slam breakfast free of charge.

On Super Bowl Sunday we timed the release of our in-game spot, digital campaign, and brand website takeover to launch simultaneously. Denny's became the most talked about restaurant in America in less than 40 hours. The campaign delivered incredible buzz. It was the second-most-searched word on Super Bowl Sunday and the number-one tweeted subject on Twitter that day.

Denny's leveraged news and trade media on the Monday after the big game. Over two thousand television stations and five hundred newspapers covered our story. Thousands of websites and over ten thousand blogs helped propagate Denny's advertising message all over Facebook, YouTube and Twitter.

The campaign generated fifty million dollars in free media exposure as the press and television picked up the feel-good story of a free Denny's breakfast in the midst of a gloomy recession. It drove significant consideration and retrial.

Leveraging Specialist Word-of-Mouth and Media Partners to Amplify Brand Conversations

Sometimes media companies can really help drive word of mouth and interest for a brand. To dramatically boost sales of Garnier Nutritioniste Eye Rollers, my agency focused on using media partners to speak to key influencers and drive product recommendation.

The program built word of mouth in a few ways, but most directly through a partnership with SheSpeaks, a network of over fifty thousand female opinion drivers who were invited to participate in sampling and share their experience with others.

To begin, we invited two thousand SheSpeaks panelists within the Eye Roller's target age group of 25 to 35 years old to participate in the

test. The panelists took part in an online survey to enroll in the Eye Roller program. Once enrolled, program participants were sent a sample of the Eye Roller, along with access to an online microsite with detailed product information and online coupons for panelists to use and pass along. The women provided feedback and participated in an interactive discussion about the Eye Roller in a discussion forum. At the end of the program, participants were invited to take an evaluation survey to provide feedback about the Eye Roller and to share their experiences with others about the product. Women-targeted magazines such as *Cookie, Allure,* and *Self* were also asked to share the product with their most active readers and to discuss their experience through online forums.

Of the magazine readers who tried the product, 86 percent said they were likely to recommend the product. Those reached through the She Speaks program increased purchase intent 174 percent. The outcome was unprecedented. The Garnier Nutritioniste Eye Roller sold over 1 million products in the first six months of the program, and those sales helped move the entire Garnier Nutritioniste franchise into the top-five skincare companies.

BUDGET FOR PRODUCTION AND IDEAS

Traditionally, word-of-mouth campaigns are funded from marketing, public relations, promotions, events, or digital budgets. Rarely are they part of the media plan's budget, such is the lack of integration that still besets our industry. Marketing PR is someone else's responsibility. But that way of thinking is being challenged by the media agencies.

Word-of-mouth programs are not a media buy, but they can and should be incorporated into the communications plan. The cost is primarily in development of the creative ideas, project management of the campaign, and various production or technology areas in the case of social media programs. If you have an idea or recommendation for a word-of-mouth program, the best way to make it possible is to include a provision in the media budget. Even though that budget may not be placed with paid media vendors, the outcome is about creating brand exposure and influence.

MEASURE SENSIBLY

Be careful about measuring word of mouth, because it can't be treated the same way other media metrics are. Word of mouth is about influencing others rather than being a traditional headcount.

Some metrics are used as basic benchmarks of word of mouth. Many of them are collected through social media monitoring or general market surveys. The general metrics measured will include page views, volume of posts, people reached, comments on posts, sentiment shifts, and number of fans. These are useful reference points to quantify reach and fine-tune the tactics. But in the end many effective social media tactics are the most difficult to measure quantitatively. Measuring the holistic key performance indicators (KPIs) of the Brand Media Strategy is the end game. We will cover this in chapter 12.

QUESTIONS WHEN DEVELOPING BRAND CONVERSATION TACTICS

1. What communication goals do you want to achieve?
2. Who are the most important influencers for this brand or campaign?
3. Will the idea surprise consumers or challenge their current thinking about the brand?
4. What will make them want to share it?
5. What touch points will reach and amplify the idea best?

CONDUCTING THE ORCHESTRA

MAKING INTEGRATION REAL

O ne of the toughest acts to pull off in marketing is integration. It's the ultimate goal for all campaigns, because it's critical to ensuring a more complete consumer experience. But integration is hard to achieve. In a survey of marketers by the Association of National Advertisers, only 25 percent of advertisers report that they are doing integrated marketing "very well" or "excellent."[1]

Integration is difficult for a lot of reasons. Agencies are splintered into specialist fields: creative, media, CRM, search, and digital, but other channels from shopper marketing to sponsorship are also part of the marketing communications mix. Agencies don't have financial incentives to work together. As agencies naturally strive to preserve their fees, this works against integration. And in this era of accountability, agencies and measurement want to distill the performance of individual pieces of the marketing communications puzzle.

This chapter covers two ideas:

1. What it takes to make integration work on the agency side
2. How to make the Brand Media Strategy come together so consumers receive a holistic brand experience

MAKING MUSIC IN COMMUNICATIONS

Although never much of a music buff, my interest swelled when my two sons started playing in their middle school band. Attending my boys' concerts, I've noticed that music has some lessons for us about integration in the communications business.

An orchestra is made up of different specialists: percussion, woodwind, brass, and strings. In our case, advertising has an ensemble of creative, media, digital, PR, and other agencies. Each section in its own right is special, but playing together in harmony creates an amazing performance. Everyone plays to the same music and in the same meter, but each instrument has its own arrangement. If all the instruments played the same tune at the same time, the performance would be flat, one dimensional. If each section were to play its own tune, it would be cacophony. Each instrument has its moment to shine, but the overall vision of the arrangement is the hero, not led by or defaulting to any single instrument. I wonder how harmonious the multiple agencies working together on a campaign sound to the client?

RETHINKING INTEGRATION

Working together in harmony, the most rudimentary point of integration, is often violated, most painfully when digital elements are added as an afterthought.

Gone are the days when creative solely drove everything; so too are the days when media led the campaign. And digital ruling it all isn't the answer either. Everyone has to come together, play their part.

There's a growing need for better integration given the increase in media usage. Among entries in the 2010 Institute of Practitioners in Advertising Effectiveness Awards, winners used on average six different media channels[2] versus just two in the 1990s. As media channel use expands, clients demand a more synthesized approach. Figure 7.1 illustrates the shifts agencies are making to bring about a more integrated approach to a Brand Media Strategy.

In the mass media era, the modus operandi at many ad agencies was, first, to crack the creative idea. Media plans were developed in parallel, but

FIGURE 7.1

A Shift in Developing Communications

Mass Media Era		Today
Creative ideas established first, then media plan developed	➡	Branding idea/Communications Planning established ahead of creative
The big TV idea	➡	The big communications idea
Full-service agencies	➡	Specialist agencies collaborating
30-second TV, full-page print ads	➡	Content in multiple platforms
Multimedia strategy	➡	Multichannel strategy

little could be finalized until the creative was determined. That creative idea usually came in the form of either a 30-second television ad or a print ad. It was assumed that these media would carry the campaign to most of the target consumers.

Once sign-off by the client was obtained, the creative teams would develop other media executions—radio, digital display, and below-the-line tactics such as direct marketing and point of sale. There would be room for some creative media ideas, perhaps ads printed on tomatoes or zany out-of-home executions for the purposes of award entries. Digital usually took another path, often through another agency and another manager in the client company. It would be unkind and inaccurate to say this happened all the time, but it would equally be untrue to say it happened only occasionally. The better agency teams wouldn't let that happen, but for many, deadlines, pragmatism, and legacy practices caused the process to fall back on bad habits.

Rob Feakins, chief creative officer and president at Publicis, New York, illustrates the new order. While working on a new business assignment, he charged several teams in his creative department to come up with a campaign. Before the teams presented their ideas to him, he called me and asked if I could talk him through the communications plan. I was intrigued; rarely do creatives express much interest in the media

plan. I asked him why he needed this. He said the relative importance of different media would help him judge the potential campaign concepts better. Knowing whether out-of-home or print or television advertising was going to be the principal channel would help him decide which idea to back.

Clearly, a shift is taking place. With a need for media-neutral strategies, we can't assume that television will always be the lead medium. Today, it makes more sense to start with understanding how and where we will connect with the target consumer and how we should use the media before we determine what to say. However, I don't think that this is a one-way process. A good Brand Media Strategy needs to be validated and challenged by those responsible for executing it. Media and creative is a partnership.

THE BIG TELEVISION IDEA VERSUS THE CENTRAL COMMUNICATIONS PLATFORM

The big television idea in advertising has lost ground to small, smartly placed, relevant impressions. Media's long tail requires that we look at not just mass audience but a broader combination of touch points. Single media campaigns these days are rare, because planners need to deploy several media to deliver sufficient reach. Often, heavy online users will be light television viewers and vice versa, so each medium needs to promote the campaign as if it were the primary one. In chapter 2, I described in the New Media Playbook section the importance of using communication to create involvement and relevancy. Central to that is considering how each medium is consumed and the different relationships and experiences that consumers have with each medium, and then exploiting those qualities. For example, when Activision promoted Guitar Hero 5, its television commercial, which played heavily in football programming, was designed to stand out among the heavy football and male-skewed commercials; its social media programs contained a lot of fan participation and interaction; and its teaser campaign on YouTube had very little branding and more risqué humor that encouraged viral pass-on.

As communications agencies, we want to avoid the matching-luggage syndrome or the "let's replicate the print into banners and TV into radio" urge. That's why a campaign needs a *Central Communications Platform or CCP* to help bring the campaign together.

I've heard different agencies describe a CCP as the brand or big idea, or the connections platform. Its purpose is to ensure that all the communications across the multiple channels are on message, appropriate to the target, and strategic. The CCP allows us to anchor and integrate the Brand Media Strategy and the media activations.

The CCP should inspire creativity. It is not the creative tagline or the ad, but it can incorporate or leverage the creative idea. It is channel agnostic and allows multiple tactics and executions to be activated. It should lead the briefing process for activation opportunities across the different marketing communications disciplines. We develop the CCP in collaboration with different specialists—creative, digital, direct, broadcast, print, out-of-home, and emerging media—in a series of workshops.

THE CENTRAL COMMUNICATIONS PLATFORM DRIVES INTEGRATION

The CCP should open the door to many tactics and be able to travel across many media platforms. It ensures all marketing communications work together in harmony. It calls for thinking collaboratively and connecting all agencies to provide integrated, focused communications execution. Once you have a CCP, then you can work with the partners to develop media solutions and tactics.

Axe body spray's CCP is "The magic promise of mating game success." This idea straddles the advertising, different media executions, and marketing touch points. The television ads sell this idea in 30 seconds. It was expanded with a branded television series about young men's quests to win women. Another addition to this was the playful Axe mating-game tool kit, which users could access online. The idea was masterfully executed with creativity and by exploiting individual medias' different strengths, but all selling the same broad idea. That's the orchestra effect in advertising.

IS THE CENTRAL COMMUNICATIONS PLATFORM
THE ACTUAL CREATIVE IDEA?

The CCP should in most cases be interchangeable with the creative idea or core brand idea.

The obvious place to start is with the campaign's creative idea. The role of the Brand Media Strategy could be to amplify that idea across all media effectively. I'm not the kind of planner who thinks that media insights and ideas have to be developed separately from the creative process. Leveraging the creative idea is a powerful and proven strategy that delivers integration.

We develop the CCP as a unifying concept that brings a lot of different ideas, tactics, and executions together in a meaningful, cohesive way. For example, Pepsi set up "Stop the Yawn" video game arcades, and consumers used Pepsi-branded Max water guns to squirt the yawns away as part of its "Wake-up" creative campaign.

DEVELOP A CENTRAL COMMUNICATIONS
PLATFORM FIRST, THEN THE CREATIVE

The CCP is developed from a consumer insight or truth that is relevant to the target audience we want to influence. Ideally, the direction helps determine how you use media to differentiate the brand from the competition.

Sometimes the CCP can lead the communications campaign and shape the creative approach. The Mars Galaxy Chocolate UK campaign is a great example of this.

We will explore how to develop CCP in chapter 11, "Execution Is the X-Factor."

FULL-SERVICE AGENCIES VERSUS
INDEPENDENT SPECIALIST AGENCIES

In reality, very few, if any, truly full-service agencies exist today. The industry has evolved to the point that agencies can't possibly provide everything.

CASE STUDY: MARS GALAXY CHOCOLATE, UK[3]

Galaxy sought to become part of the indulgence rituals that enrich women's lives.

The insight: that millions of women entered a richly imaginative world when reading books. Sixty percent of women indulge their passion for reading every week. And reading books was an increasingly common pastime among women. Chocolate and reading were guilty pleasures that went hand in hand, so the marketer attempted to create relationships to exploit that partnership.

Galaxy, over a three-year period, developed a relationship with women via the indulgence of reading. The strategy started as 15 percent of the activation budget, and has developed into the mainstay of brand communications, inviting women to "unwind with a good book."

Galaxy built partnerships with publishers and with UK television presenters Richard and Judy, who had a talk show featuring book selections. Galaxy also worked with retailers such as supermarkets and bookstores. The deals with publishers meant that around twenty-six million books carried the Galaxy brand on the front cover. Galaxy sponsored book clubs, the product appeared inside and on the covers of books, and ads were adjacent to book displays.

Galaxy also sponsored the British Book Awards, in which the public votes. As a result of the campaign, in a tough sales environment Galaxy won its biggest market share. Galaxy enjoyed a 38 percent rise in sales over the previous year.

It's nigh impossible to have creative, media planning and buying, site development, online advertising, online search, events, PR, social media, packaging, and shopper marketing under the same roof.

Some agencies provide central integrated thinking and services, but bring in specialist discipline partners to support and implement the programs. Often specialist partners are managed or owned within their agency's holding company groups. However, many times they are independent firms or separately appointed by the clients. Whatever the structure, what's absolutely necessary is the ability to collaborate with different departments and specialist teams. Some of these teams will have their own distinct culture or may even be competitors. An environment that unifies the teams is an important ingredient for succeeding.

BRINGING MEDIA BACK INTO THE AGENCY

This has been a source of debate in the industry. Creative agencies are missing the input of media, particularly communications planning. However, simply putting media back in the agency proves to be a challenge.

First, the media 15 years ago was not as complicated as it is now. Today, a true media Renaissance man or woman is rare. Such a person needs to not only be smart, have great relationships with media vendors, and be able to work with creatives but also have strong strategic and consumer insight, have flair, be conversant with all the digital and emerging channels, and have a strong aptitude for data analysis. It's rare to find all that in one person. The communications planner today relies on a team of specialists whom they can access and collaborate with.

A number of creative agencies have added communications planning to their offerings. Some have succeeded, while others have struggled to make it work. The ability for media to have a voice and influence has rested largely on the personality of the planner and on the commitment by the agency management to listen and respond to communications planning in largely account-management or creative-driven cultures.

COLLABORATION AND INTEGRATION APPROACHES

Speaking at an American Advertising Federation annual meeting, Tracy Benson, the senior director of marketing and digital at Best Buy, said, "We need to talk about our brands, across a number of touch points."[4] To adjust to such integration, she said, the first requirement is "a shift in mindset of every agency employee. There can be no boundaries." An integrated marketing program must focus on "what's best for the brand, not for me as a media specialist. You need to get creative and PR teams thinking that way."

From the agency perspective, Sarah Personette, vice president at Publicis Groupe's MediaVest Worldwide, says integration depends on three simple words: "Check your ego."

DEVELOPING T-SHAPED PEOPLE

T-shaped people combine a depth of knowledge in one marketing discipline with a breadth of understanding in the wider spectrum of disciplines. They know how each discipline can be blended with others to deliver one integrated campaign.

Ideal blends of skill sets include creative people who have an appreciation of media, digital executives who have an understanding of how branding works, and media people willing to explore nontraditional solutions.

CHI & Partners managing partners Sarah Golding and Neil Goodlad claim that agencies need to be rich in creative and planning talent and media buying.[5] There's no place for tired preconceptions and complacencies in a participative world. People have to have confidence in new media. They need to learn the necessary new skills.

CONTENT ON MULTIPLE PLATFORMS

As media companies branch out by putting content on different platforms to maximize their audience potential, an agency's communications planning needs to leverage that into opportunity.

Different platforms communicate differently, deliver different communication experiences. Creative that is developed for, rather than adapted to, the medium is going to be more relevant to how consumers interact and use that medium. For example, MasterCard's "Priceless" campaign uses television to build on the emotion of what *priceless* can mean at a very human level. MasterCard's www.priceless.com provided great consumer-facing applications that supported the brand proposition. These include the MasterCard Gift Finder, Priceless Pointers, and tools and tips for better handling credit and finances. The company created a mobile Priceless Picks application, which recognizes your location and presents a three-dimensional map of Priceless picks: recommended restaurants, bars, museums, and popular items on sale.

MULTIMEDIA STRATEGY, MULTICHANNEL STRATEGY

A multimedia strategy focuses on different advertising solutions. A multichannel strategy encompasses several more drivers for marketing, for example, advertising to drive the brand, direct marketing to drive response, point of sale and packaging to drive purchase.

Traditional boundaries of media are being pushed beyond advertising as clients look for broader advice on their marketing plan. Google is as much an ecommerce driver as it is a brand tool. Social media is as much about driving PR as driving the brand. Mobile and online are as much coupon distribution tools as they are advertising tools.

Sponsorship on television and radio is comparable to sponsorship of events. As media seeks to increase experiences, agencies are going outside traditional media venues to promote brands.

NON-PAID MEDIA CHANNELS

Marketing channel specialists, such as content providers and sponsorship, are working with media agencies to target traditional media budgets, and clients want the rigor of evaluation and measurement of media platforms to be applied to other marketing channel decisions.

This is stretching communications planning into an area that many planners are less comfortable in, the area of non-paid media advertising channels.

BRINGING IT BACK TOGETHER—LIKE AN ORCHESTRA

Two key roles bring the orchestra together: those of the composer and the conductor. The composer is really the owner of the strategy. In advertising, strategy is a joint effort. There's the marketing plan, the brand idea, the Brand Media Strategy, and the digital program. At the end of the day, the client has the final say on how it pieces together.

Then there is the conductor. Who fills the role of conductor in a marketing campaign is largely dependent on the attitude of the client. Mark Ritson, associate professor of marketing at Melbourne Business

School in Australia and a vocal spokesperson on branding globally, says that only the brand manager or client can fill this role.[6] The conductor role often defaults to the agencies. Traditionally, the creative agency has lead. However, I have seen very successful examples of the lead role being performed by the digital agency, the communications planning agency, or the PR agency.

When I worked with Procter & Gamble, the strategic lead person was often the brand manager, who worked with his or her marketing service partners. At WPP, holding company groups such as Team Detroit, which manages the Ford Motors account, would be the lead agency account leader. Other clients I've found, such as L'Oréal, have had in place an integrated marketing team, whose role is to coordinate and steer the outputs of the different agencies.

What's important is to have clear rules of engagement, a spirit of collaboration, and a focus on the work. One example of how I've seen it work brilliantly is when our UK agency worked with mobile network company O2, which espoused all these qualities and epitomized them with their internal mantra "It only works if it all works."

CASE STUDY: O2 FORMULA FOR INTEGRATION

Our agency worked with an incredible client and a superb creative agency, VCCP, alongside digital shop Agency Republic and PR firm Jackie Cooper. This union represented true marketing communications integration.

O2 was one of the most celebrated integrated-brand marketing stories in the United Kingdom in the 2000s. The agency team helped transform the former British Telecom cell phone division into a power brand that differentiated itself in one of the most competitive categories. They grew their business from number four to number one in the market.

They knew they wanted to build their brand, but their budget needed to support both their product and promotional initiatives. The challenge for O2 was how to be successful on both counts simultaneously. The solution was to ensure complete strategic integration.

INDEPENDENT, SPECIALIST AGENCIES COLLABORATING

The client encouraged us to work together as one team and selected agency partners and teams that shared the same values, culture, and passion for their brand. We all got on and had respect for each other. A lot of credit went to O2's creative agency, VCCP, which always wanted to be inclusive and integrated in media. Integrating O2's communications would be a major weapon in competing against higher-spending rivals. Integration became a necessity to be efficient and competitive.

The project began with the client's chairing communications teams that included senior management from the creative, media, digital, and PR agencies, who would steer their communications. This encouraged senior agency leaders to focus on the business.

BIG COMMUNICATION IDEAS

O2 took a very brand-centric approach to communicating their initiatives.

Rather than just being a provider of mobile technology or becoming a mobile visionary, O2 set out to become a brand that enabled the customer to do more things. They wanted to portray a brand that existed solely to provide the customer more ways to work, play, and communicate.

This central idea of "enablement" and the company's attitude of emphasizing fresh thinking led to a kind of can-do mantra and the creation of a set of values: bold, open, trusted, and clear. That was how the communications team was expected to work.

COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING AHEAD OF CREATIVE EXECUTION

O2 was a retail business that was very focused on monthly performance numbers such as new acquisitions and churn, or the number of people who leave the service.

The campaign needed to work to reinforce the brand, but most importantly it needed to work as a promotion to drive those statistics in the right direction. O2's campaign was never about advertising, but about an idea. They maximized the effectiveness of communications by integrating all the elements so that the brand idea could be carried through to each aspect of the marketing. All the agency partners had opportunities to develop multimedia executions.

O2's marketing worked because the company started with a brand idea, rather than a creative execution. That brand idea was driven by a consumer

insight that helped drive communications planning. For example, when promoting free texting between 7 P.M. and 8 P.M. for new customers, they developed the promotion around the brand idea of happy hour. This manifested in different media tactics, including taxi cab advertising with O2-branded cabs offering free rides between 7 P.M. and 8 P.M. and happy hour promotions in bars and pubs.

COORDINATING A MULTICHANNEL STRATEGY

The brand idea and the can-do attitude informed and shaped everything from product positioning to advertising and sponsorship, from staff conferences to trade launches. It also enabled the business to use what typically would be short-term initiatives to fuel long-term brand growth.

Other brands in the UK phone market appeared more remote from their day-to-day product offering. Rivals established an image and a personality through their brand with product offerings, such as bonus airtime and new service plans. But they were used in a tactical way, to drive short-term sales.

O2 had neither the time nor the resources to adopt such a parallel approach. Rather than treating products as technical gizmos, or tariffs as tactical one-off promotions, O2's communications wrapped the whole company in the brand idea. This was intended not only to create consumer-focused propositions that were of genuine interest and relevance but also to drive positive associations with the brand.

O2 also understood that putting out messaging, product support, or promotions across different touch points in the same period added to confusion and misappropriation, and it competed for attention and mind space. The company was very disciplined in running a single campaign in all media.

CONSISTENT BRAND LOOK

The cell phone company has benefited enormously from the efficiencies of a very complete visual integration across all communication channels, from television to print to online and in-store. The distinctive blue visual branding and the O2 bubbles and neonlike campaign elements were evident in all communication touch points.

QUESTIONS TO ASK TO FACILITATE
COMMUNICATION INTEGRATION

1. Review some media campaigns and ask yourself, Does the campaign have a Central Communications Platform?
2. How can this campaign travel across multiple touch points, exploiting the unique qualities of each one?
3. Is there a spirit of collaboration among the agency teams?
4. What knowledge or skills do I have to develop beyond my core competencies to be T-shaped?
5. What can we do to work more effectively as a team with the other disciplines or agency partners?

UNLOCKING MOMENTS OF RECEPTIVITY

HOW MEDIA CONTEXT HELPS ADVERTISING DELIVER MORE RELEVANT COMMUNICATIONS

I n the late nineties, I worked as a media planner at Saatchi & Saatchi on the agency's prized Procter & Gamble account. At the time, I recall, our Saatchi & Saatchi New York office recommended a media strategy that proved to be a breakthrough for Tide laundry detergent.

Tide, like many brands in the Procter & Gamble portfolio back then, was primarily a television advertiser. The brand targeted the household shopper, and television efficiently delivered strong reach to the target. The problem was that the brand was beginning to plateau. The agency team took a brave step in recommending a switch in strategy.

The idea was to make Tide advertising more relevant to its audience by placing it at the *"point of dirt."* The company shifted more of its budget to out-of-home media, and Tide ads appeared on so-called dirty media: on the back of buses above the tail pipe, in train stations, in playgrounds, and at agricultural exhibitions in rural areas. Tide ads appeared on paper napkins in diners and in a variety of external city locations—each with

customized creative messages. For example, they placed an ad on bus shelters near ice cream stores that said, "When your popsicle suddenly becomes just a sip. . . ." The idea was to make people think of the product when they encountered a dirty environment. Sales of Tide grew 9 percent in markets where the campaign ran.

The role of a relevant location—coupled with relevant messaging—is a powerful idea. It was a very deliberate choice of creativity over coverage, impact over efficiency. I refer to this as receptivity planning—that is, identifying the moments or places consumers will be more receptive to the messaging. It's become an effective tactic as part of a Brand Media Strategy. Receptivity planning has utility beyond outdoor advertising. Technology platforms are quickly updating this strategy. We're seeing placement of, for example, digital advertising served in relevant content and well-placed links with relevant search terms. We are seeing increased opportunities for location-based advertising on mobile media and addressable advertising on television.

We will explore receptivity tactics in more depth in this chapter.

DRIVING INCREASED ENGAGEMENT

As I've noted in the preceding chapters, the job of communications planning is to influence, not just reach, people. In the ad business we're obsessed with engagement. Some agencies have established engagement planning departments. It's advertising's equivalent of Sir Lancelot's Holy Grail. The problem is that it's hard to define, hard to measure, and something of a catch-all term. But engagement isn't something new. Creative directors will tell you that the purpose of an ad has always been to engage its audience. As I see it, four main factors influence marketing communications engagement.

THE BRAND OFFER OR BRAND ITSELF

A Sony flat-screen television on sale for 75 percent off will certainly get attention. On the other hand, a new product launch from Apple in itself creates instant interest.

THE APPEAL AND IMPACT OF THE MESSAGE ITSELF

The craft and delivery of the creative execution can make a brand famous and get people interested. British chocolate company Cadbury fielded an ad campaign of a gorilla playing the drums to a Phil Collins song, "In the Air Tonight." It became a viral sensation, gaining over 10 million plays on YouTube and resulting in 70 Facebook sites. The video was popular because it was different and unexpected and, in a sea of communications clutter, it engaged. Consumers talked about it and bought the company's chocolate bars.

THE MIND-SET OF THE CONSUMER

Consumers who are already looking for a product or service will be more engaged in what the advertiser is saying. If you're planning a vacation to Australia, you notice any ad or article featuring the outback or Sydney Harbor Bridge. The consumer's own lifestyle and interests stimulate interest. We know that NASCAR fans have a strong propensity toward brands that sponsor its cars or drivers.

THE CONTEXT OF THE MESSAGE: HOW AND WHEN IS IT DELIVERED?

The context or environment the ad message appears in has a strong influence on the level of engagement. Primarily, this is about relevance: relevance to the message, relevance to the product, or relevance to the consumer.

Clearly, the client, the creative agency, and the media teams all play a role in determining engagement. From a media communications perspective, we center on the last two factors: the mind-set of the consumer and the context of how and when the message is delivered.

Should the communications planner have a say in the creative work itself? I say let the creative people get on with creative. They have a tough job. In this business, everyone—up to and including the chairman's spouse—is allowed to have an opinion on the ads. One of our

principal roles as communications planners is to make that messaging work better and harder.

Communications planners can't determine the creative, but they can deliver receptivity: the right viewers, mind-set, context. Don Gloeckler, Procter & Gamble's chief researcher in North America, observes, "I am less able to influence engagement than I am able to influence receptivity."[1] Engagement is an outcome of receptivity. The best communications planner knows how to exploit media that seeks out the most receptive consumer.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY RECEPTIVITY?

Receptivity is about shifting from *delivering* messages to understanding how they are *received*. It is about focusing on context: finding the most relevant places to match the media with the message, the consumer with the brand. Receptivity is concerned with using media to drive brand and message involvement. Most importantly, it concerns generating deeper impressions, not just gross impressions.

IT'S NEVER BEEN ABOUT REACHING EVERYONE

Brand Media Strategies that concentrate on mass-audience reach as the principal driver of generating more sales are no longer effective. That approach is expensive and unreliable.

To give an idea of how blunt traditional broad targeting can be, let's look at auto giant Toyota, an extensive media advertiser. Sales of its best-selling Camry at the peak of the market had annual US sales of 400,000 to 450,000 cars. Typically, an agency might plan and buy for a demographic of men and women aged 25 to 54 with a household income above seventy-five thousand dollars. That target demographic accounts for some fifty-seven million people. So in this case, less than 1 percent of the people targeted were in the market to buy.

Reaching fewer people more effectively is one of the principles guiding our approach to receptivity planning.

RECEPTIVITY PLANNING IS NOT PUTTING ADS NEXT TO RELEVANT CONTENT

Some people may think receptivity is about running ads for food products in the cooking section of women's magazines or placing car ads on automotive websites such as Edmunds.com. That isn't what's meant. These environments are valid places to advertise, but they are established venues. They are also where a lot of your competitors are, which makes it incredibly difficult to compete for attention. Today's communications planners exploit media receptivity tactics to help their clients stand out.

FIVE RECEPTIVITY TACTICS

Five tactics in receptivity planning have proved to be effective uses of media. They are effective because they add to the messaging and branding impact of the communication. The case studies that follow illustrate how the planners developed the following tactics:

- Contextual planning
- Situational advertising
- Leveraging of target passion points
- Branding inside content
- Tapping into consumers' relationship with media

CONTEXTUAL PLANNING

Former Carat chief executive officer David Verklin used to speak of the "moment of aperture," or the moment when consumers are in the right mind-set to think about the product category. For instance, on a rainy day, commuters are greeted as they leave the train station by umbrella sales guys.

We need to tap into media environments and content that reflect those moments. The media environments should be chosen on the basis of a receptivity insight about targeted consumers and how they may interact with that media.

Contextual advertising requires the advertiser to offer a message in a place that works. For example, consider the Hispanic market. The Hispanic population is growing ten times as fast as the general market. Of that population, 73 percent speak Spanish at home. One comment in a focus group that really brought it home to me was "When I see an ad in Spanish, I feel those brands are talking to me."[2] Ads in the right context will always cause more receptivity.

One case that superbly illustrates how a receptivity insight translated to a contextual planning approach is the campaign for Ambien CR.

CASE STUDY: ADVERTISING AT THE POINT OF NEED: AMBIEN CR

One of my clients Sanofi-Aventis, the maker of sleep-aid Ambien, was facing new competition as its brand was going generic. The company needed a marketing plan to launch its new formulation, Ambien CR, a controlled-release sleep-aid. It promised "A good night's sleep from start to finish." Its lead competitor, Sepracor's Lunesta, was planning to spend some 200 million dollars on a media marketing blitz, more than double Ambien CR's annual budget.

As Ambien CR's media agency, we undertook insight work to develop the Brand Media Strategy. For the advertising to resonate, it needed to work at both a creative and a media environment level.

Agency research uncovered two insights about people who suffer from insomnia. The first was an emotional one: sufferers know they don't get enough sleep, but they tend to tough it out. It is not until they are suffering from stress that they become more receptive to messaging from products like Ambien CR. That insight was important as it helped lead to another contextual revelation.

The agency asked, "What kind of relationship do insomniacs have with various media when they are under stress?" The answer was striking. Insomnia sufferers have a very different relationship with all kinds of media when they are under stress. They actively seek out media to help keep them occupied and calm them down. They watch late-night and early-morning television more than nonsufferers. They are more likely to be up watching television or surfing the Web on Sunday nights, before the start of the workweek. They are more likely

to be visiting travel websites, looking for a getaway. Sufferers tend to watch television to relax and use the Web to keep occupied.

We reasoned that if we could tap into media at the moments of stress, consumers would be more receptive to the advertising messages. This simple question about context gave us plenty of clues about when to advertise, where to advertise, and how to advertise. Ambien CR combined television and online in a complementary way; television built awareness of the benefit and online gave the detailed explanation of how it worked and distributed a coupon special offer.

Late night and early morning became important times to advertise, in particular Sunday night and Monday morning. Sufferers were most likely thinking about their upcoming workweek, a moment of stress. We ran a heavy concentration of Ambien CR commercials during the "morning papers" segment on CNN.

The media plan also called for targeting business travelers who experience time-zone changes.

On daylight saving weekend, when the clocks shift forward an hour, people lose an hour of sleep, and the media gives extra attention to insomnia. Ambien CR sponsored a CBS "Healthwatch" feature about time changes and sleep awareness.

Without focusing on media context, it would have been very easy to do just a demographic analysis of insomnia sufferers and run media based on where those demographic audiences could be reached. Ambien CR would have missed a huge opportunity to send highly targeted messages when and where their potential buyers were most engaged with the specific media being used.

In the end, we came up with a plan for Ambien CR that met its volume objectives and cost half of what its new competitor spent. This campaign's receptivity strategy allowed it to cut through.

SITUATIONAL ADVERTISING (BASED ON TACTICAL TIMING)

Situational advertising leverages the right occasion or the right time period for a message to connect most effectively. Similar to contextual planning, situational advertising taps into the consumer's mind-set to increase the receptivity of the messaging. However, in this case, the timing of the messaging is particularly tactical. Running advertising at certain times of day on different media allows the planner to maximize receptivity.

Citroen C5 in the United Kingdom wanted to increase brand consideration among fleet users. Analysis showed that these people had little free time and that they spent most of their work and leisure time in the car.

The planning team used IPA TouchPoints, a database of the mood of consumers across media and time of day. They were able to determine the times of day that drivers would be most alert for running ads about product and functionality. The same research showed that drivers were most relaxed later in the evening. The team ran emotional brand-led ads on television to capitalize on that mind-set.[3]

What about Online Receptivity?

The UK-based Internet Advertising Bureau set out to discover when users were most receptive to ad messaging online. The study found that early evening was the best time of day for all age groups and that younger audiences paid more attention as the day progressed. Older age groups peaked between 9:00 A.M. and 12:00 P.M. and between 2:00 P.M. and 6:00 P.M.[4] The respondents said the best time to reach them with messages was during e-commerce activity, such as researching the best deals or shopping online.

Capturing Occasions and Events to Enhance Receptivity

One great example of tapping into an event for advertising, was when furniture retailer IKEA created an ambitious out-of-home ad campaign that focused on the first family move from Chicago to Washington, D.C. They played up the theme of Barack Obama and his family having to furnish their new home in the White House.

They built a display of the White House's Oval Office fitted with IKEA furniture at Union Station the Washington, D.C., main train hub. The integrated campaign included billboards carrying the IKEA "Embrace Change '09" slogan on local buses and trains and encouraging home owners to change their furniture. IKEA even created a mock motorcade, including the presidential limo, that featured IKEA furniture tied on the vehicles' roofs and was prominently driven around the area.

LEVERAGING OF TARGET PASSION POINTS

Advertisers can connect to consumers by relating to their passions and interests. Sometimes those passion points are directly related to the brand, sometimes not. Advertisers might create an identity for a brand by association with certain lifestyle activities. Citizen Watches, for instance, espouses tradition and precision, and has thus associated itself with the US Open tennis championship for many years.

Another alternative for advertisers is to attach ads to content the consumer is passionate about and create a relationship around that special interest. The US Army used Microsoft's Xbox video game Halo 3 to increase brand consideration by creating a brand experience that expanded on current perceptions of a soldier to reflect an aspirational branch of the military. The ads were aimed at reinforcing the army as a high-tech and cutting-edge profession and extolling the experience, the teamwork, and the training.

This is a great example of an advertiser targeting potential recruits through their passions, the largest of which is gaming. The campaign shifted attitudes and perceptions about the service, with 43 percent of gamers recalling the army sponsorship and leaving with a more positive opinion of the army.[5]

Similarly, our client Toyota's Scion has a brand proposition that promotes being a leading cultural lifestyle brand for Generation Y. Their Brand Media Strategy is to influence the influencers and target the opinion formers who can drive brand credibility through their networks and communities. Their approach is to let other brands make a sell through traditional mainstream media, while Scion establishes credibility with their influencers through passionate media venues.

Rather than simply advertise, we used media to build content that entertains and immerses those influencers. The experience has to be authentic and interesting. Our strategy was to make the brand part of the content experience.

We found those opinion formers online at passion sites that helped influence the wider pop culture world. Those sites during this campaign

included two music-themed destinations, metalinsider.com and dubstep. com (a dance music site), and a video game site, gamespy.com. We steered clear of buying anything on Yahoo! or E! or even on MTV.com. The campaign engaged thirty thousand cultural opinion formers in various art forms: film, digital design, and music. The campaign reached a further twenty-five million people who visited, interacted, and clicked through to the custom-branded content on special-interest publisher sites.

To promote its flat-panel televisions, consumer electronics manufacturer LG used Condé Nast Media Group magazines to tap into their target's passion for film and cinematography. One installment featured film director Edward Zwick (*Glory, The Last Samurai*) in a four-page insert in *Architectural Digest, Vanity Fair, Vogue,* and *GQ.* The customized feature showed Zwick on a desert movie set looking at an LG flat-panel television and included his thoughts on cinematography and landscapes. The online portion contained dedicated LG websites on Condé Nast properties, including style.com, concierge.com, and wired.com, that featured video interviews with Zwick as well as a behind-the-scenes tour of his Santa Monica, California, office. The focus on Zwick and his experience, not the LG equipment, created a more emotional link to the LG brand. LG's partnership was noteworthy in that it made Condé Nast both the creator and sole distributor of the ad—a great example of a publisher going beyond just selling traditional media space.

BRANDING INSIDE CONTENT

Product and Brand Placement

Product and brand placement is an effective way of generating increased receptivity. Product placement, product integration, and program sponsorship, all under the umbrella term *branded placement,* have become much more prominent and much more tactical, particularly in the United States. That growth in use has been fueled by a couple of important developments in the industry. One is the motivation by broadcasters and content providers to defray or subsidize production costs amid more fragmented audiences. Another is the growth of DVRs, now in half of US households with televisions, which has caused media buyers and sellers to develop

"TiVo-buster" tactics. Product placement is now opening up in Europe, which in the past largely restricted the appearance of commercial messaging in television programming.

Put simply, branded placement works. Sony product placements were all over the remake of the James Bond movie *Casino Royale*. All characters used Sony VAIO laptops, and a Blu-ray disc is prominent at one point. The characters use Sony Ericsson cell phones, Sony GPS devices, and Sony Bravia television sets. Bond uses a Cybershot camera to take photos. Product placement in movies is big business. In *Iron Man,* the main character's alter ego, Tony Stark, scarfs a Burger King cheeseburger. George Clooney flies American Airlines in *Up in the Air*.

Apple Inc. in the week before launching its iPad orchestrated an entire episode of ABC's *Modern Family* consisting of Claire and Phil Dunphy's plight of trying to buy the iPad on the first day it goes on sale. A viewer can spot placements on television any night of the week. None of these appearances happen by chance. They are carefully placed by advertisers and producers as part of commercial ad buys or production sponsorships as ways to engage a receptive audience already locked into a show.

Some pundits cry foul, suggesting that advertisers are crossing the line. There are some egregious examples—I wonder if Sherlock Holmes in CBS's *Elementary* would really use Microsoft's Bing to solve crimes. On the whole, advertisers, agencies, and program makers want the brand to appear in content in a way that is positive and tasteful. My experience in working with television executives is that viewers themselves provide strong checks and balances that prevent marketers from going too far. If you do something that viewers react to negatively, you'll see a post online or on a blog almost immediately. No brand manager or media buyer wants to be responsible for negative feedback.

Product placement is becoming ever more sophisticated. With tongue in cheek, Tina Fey parodies the entire business in an episode of NBC's *30 Rock.* Here's the scene: "Are you all right?" Liz [Lemon, played by Tina Fey] asks boss Jack [Donaghy, played by Alec Baldwin]. "Never mind," Jack replies, glancing at his phone and heading for the door. "These Verizon Wireless phones are just so popular, I accidentally grabbed one belonging to an acquaintance." "Well, sure," Liz replies. "'Cause that Verizon

Wireless service is just unbeatable! If I saw a phone like that on TV, I'd be like, 'Where is my nearest retailer so I can get one—?'" Fey stares at the camera with a tight grin. "Can we have our money now?"[7]

This practice of product placement has quickly shifted online. In Netflix's *House of Cards*, it's lead character Congressman Frank Underwood, played by Kevin Spacey, finds time to play on his Sony Playstation Vita.

TAPPING INTO CONSUMERS' RELATIONSHIP WITH MEDIA

Americans spend on average nine hours a day with media. It's become a enormous part of their lives and hugely influences social and cultural fashion. Observing how media is consumed helps us be smarter about how to give messaging real impact. That's the theme of our final receptivity tactic: increasing the relevance of the brand by tapping into the crossroads of media and culture to deliver highly relevant brand communications.

The first case study that follows is one of my personal favorite campaigns. It's about how British phone company Orange advertises at the movies. It's a campaign about gaining acceptance from consumers and about how an advertiser can be welcomed on some occasions by making a positive contribution to the media experience.

The second case revolves around how Toyota tapped into insights of how YouTube was being used and exploited this insight wonderfully for Corolla.

CASE STUDY: ORANGE CINEMA PROMOTION[9]

Phone company Orange created a cinema campaign that one newspaper reviewer described as being better than the movies that followed.[10]

Mother, the agency that conceived the campaign, discovered as much as possible about cinema culture by talking to the audience first as moviegoers, not as consumers of mobile services. The agency came up with a few interesting findings: since moviegoers had paid to be entertained, they expected to be rewarded by the entire experience, including the ads and the trailers. Because they had this mind-set, they felt that deliberate brand and product placement

in movies ruined their experience and was embarrassing to brands. Inside the cinema, mobile phones were unwelcome. If someone else's phone went off, it was annoying, and if you were that someone else, it was mortifying.

To demonstrate self-awareness—that Orange understood all these things—the company created a fictitious Board of Orange, which had company executives sit behind a desk adjudicating marketing pitches and movie ideas in a comedic series featuring film directors and actors, including the likes of Spike Lee, Carrie Fisher, Ewan McGregor, and Sigourney Weaver. Their characters personified all the ruinous influences that brands and marketing have had on the cinematic experience.

While it was a risky marketing effort, it showed cultural intelligence. The dialogue was laced with movie references to show how deeply Orange was involved in movie culture. They made the obligatory "turn off your phone" message more entertaining. They created Orange Wednesdays, when Orange customers could take a friend to the cinema for free.

The results proved that the Orange cinema spots delivered significant brand recognition and talkability. Of all the communications channels that Orange invests in, cinema continues to have the most positive impact on the brand.

CASE STUDY: TOYOTA LAUGHS IT UP WITH YOUTUBE[11]

For the launch of the Corolla, Toyota was trying to reach young adults in their late teens and early twenties. Marketers know that this group is hard to reach at the best of times, and the emergence of digital media has made this job is even tougher.

As one of America's top-spending brands on television, Toyota knows that television viewing by this demographic group has been falling in recent years. One solution has been to shift more money for youth-oriented products to online advertising and events. Yet the problem with advertising strategies that "push" the message over to the Web is the tremendous number of sites available to youth. The audience is highly fragmented, and many sites don't lend themselves to the kind of relevant, noninterruptive messaging that a younger audience values.

Toyota and its agency, Saatchi & Saatchi LA, solved this problem with a combination of consumer insight, contextual insight, and good old-fashioned

media planning basics. The first insight was clear: to reach a young audience, a brand needed to be on the Web. Whether Web or television, Toyota needed to find a broad-reach channel.

On the Web, few sites offer the kind of reach necessary to fulfill that goal. While Facebook and YouTube were sites that might work, they were not the kind of sites that could accommodate interruptive advertising. The key was to find a way to work with such broad-reach sites to enhance the user experience instead of detracting from it. This was particularly important for Corolla, a car with a boring heritage, but one that now offered a model perfectly styled and priced for young people. That's where the contextual insights came in.

Saatchi & Saatchi LA's executive communications director, John Lisko, set his team to the task. They quickly came up with a simple, powerful contextual insight: the content people seek out on YouTube is very different from television. On YouTube they were looking at predominantly short and funny films. With this thought in mind, the team realized that they could do a lot more than just push a digital advertisement on YouTube. They could use the site as a medium to pull in consumers, offering young viewers a chance to see the best-of-the-best of funny short clips and a chance get involved in the comedy content that they loved. Out of this insight, two YouTube-Toyota Corolla initiatives were born: "Best in Jest" and "Sketchies," both powered by YouTube and custom designed for Toyota

"Best in Jest" is a repository for the funniest videos of the week. It is sponsored by Corolla and features funny videos of the Corolla brand for those who wish to view them. The "Best in Jest" collection adds value to the YouTube experience, allowing people to see the funniest videos quickly without having to find them via countless hours of searching.

"Sketchies" is a site where the viewing community can submit short comedy sketch videos to be judged for cash and prizes. The videos had to include a road trip (for obvious reasons) and a musical instrument (just for fun). "Best in Jest" and "Sketchies" allowed Corolla to be relevant as an advertiser on YouTube because they understood the context and made the most of it for YouTube users.

The results were outstanding. Saatchi & Saatchi LA reported that the campaign resulted in a significant increase in brand favorability and purchase consideration among respondents who had visited the sites. One of the most impressive statistics was the result that 55 percent of visitors to the "Sketchies" contest said they would consider purchasing a Corolla.

Saatchi's Lisko attributes the success to the power of the original media insight: "This campaign was the difference between advertising on YouTube

and creating a new YouTube experience that was relevant to a young audience and a perfect fit for Corolla. Corolla was adding value, not taking away. Working with new media is about understanding three things: context, context, and context. When media insights get a seat at the creative table amazing things can happen."

Exploiting media context and media environments can amplify the creative messaging to deliver more relevant and involved brand communications. Uncovering moments of receptivity is a key tactic for driving engagement. These five receptivity tactics have proved to be a powerful means of delivering highly effective brand media strategies.

QUESTIONS TO ASK TO FIND WAYS TO EXPLOIT RECEPTIVITY IN MEDIA

1. What insights do we have into how audiences are using individual media vehicles or touch points and what do they tell us about how to communicate better to them?
2. Put yourself in the target consumer's shoes. What factors would make the messaging more relevant or interesting to him or her?
3. If you're in the market for a product, in which media would you actively look for information and ideas about the product category?
4. In what places, occasions, or times would the consumer most likely be more open to finding out more about this product category?
5. What places would be less appropriate to advertise in terms of receptivity?

TOUCH POINT SELECTION

DETERMINING THE RIGHT
MEDIA CHANNEL MIX

THINK LIKE AN INVESTMENT FUND MANAGER

Communications planners are, in effect, investment managers. We manage large sums of money. We advise our clients where to invest. We analyze which media are going to give better returns. And we recommend a strategy of how best to use them. In the case of an advertiser, those returns are defined by the communication goals.

Fund managers first determine which broad sectors to invest in. They look at the fundamentals, the macro factors—which areas show potential, which are less risky, and which to discount. Then there is stock picking, our equivalent of media planning. Media planners take the budget and determine the best options to buy.

An investment manager once told me that 65 percent of an investment portfolio's returns are determined by going into the right sectors and markets. The balance of the return comes from stock picking. Media works the same way.

INVESTING IN THE RIGHT TOUCH POINTS

An important element of the Brand Media Strategy is integrating the brand communications across the different touch points in a way that best

exploits the target consumer's relationship with each of the channels. As we'll see later in this chapter, Italian pasta maker Buitoni saw better results from its marketing by using touch points that stimulated a last-minute buy at the supermarket. For the delivery company UPS, in explaining its offering, video presented the most effective tool.

The job of the communications planner is to first consider *all* possible touch points. Next we refine the selection of these touch points by deciding which will achieve maximum synergy with the message.

It is through this process that we determine the combination of media exposure and consumer experiences. Creating the best marketing integration comes from embracing true media neutrality, evaluating the metrics of each channel, and then activating tactics that deliver the communication goals. This is a blend of science and art. But it's also driven by a need to make the right choices and trade-offs to ensure the Brand Media Strategy is focused and sells.

This chapter will explain how to identify the core touch points and determine how they work together.

IN MARKETING, WE'RE ALL CHANNEL BIASED

Every executive has his or her own bias about which media works best—from the creative director who's sold award-winning television campaigns his entire career to the digital-savvy account planner who favors social media solutions over traditional media campaigns. Big media agencies are sometimes accused of favoring mass media over niche ones. The digital agency will always be pitching for a bigger share of the budget and so on.

Clients are the same. Procter & Gamble continues to spend the vast majority of its budget on television advertising. Some clients, in contrast, show a distinct bias against traditional media, challenging the agency to explore the next bright and shiny thing. The onus on the communications planner is to be the umpire.

THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING MEDIA NEUTRAL

Being media neutral shifts the thinking from share of voice to share of mind. Everything can be a medium. Every medium can project the brand,

from a television ad to direct mail, from a conversation with a sales assistant to the product's packaging.

Owned media is media that incorporates a company's own content, packaging, point of sale, and people who come into contact with consumers. This includes the trucks that transport the product and the product demonstrators inside supermarkets. *Earned media* is PR, buzz, recommendation, and advice prompted by influencers and consumers.

Paid, owned, and earned media all contribute to brand and purchase influence. Each media form works differently, which needs to be taken into consideration when planning how to use them. Figure 9.1 describes each of the three media.

FIGURE 9.1

Definition of Owned, Paid and Earned Media

Media Type	Definition	Examples	The Role	Benefits	Challenges
Owned media	Channel a brand controls	• Website • Mobile site • Blog • Twitter account	Build for longer-term relationships with existing potential customers and earn media	• Control • Cost efficiency • Longevity • Versatility • Niche audiences	• No guarantees • Company communication not trusted • Takes time to scale
Paid media	Brand pays to leverage a channel	• Display ads • Paid search • Sponsorships	Shift from foundation to a catalyst that feeds owned and creates earned media	• In demand • Immediacy • Scale • Control	• Clutter • Declining response rates • Poor credibility
Earned media	When customers become the channel	• WOM • Buzz • Viral	Listen and respond — earned media is often the result of well-executed owned and paid media	• Most credible • Key role in most sales • Transparent and lives on	• No control • Can be negative • Scale • Hard to measure

Source: Forrester Research

RIGHT MEDIA FOR THE RIGHT JOB

Different media create different experiences, and some are better suited to certain communication goals. A study evaluated which were the key mass media on the basis of how budgets were allocated by primary marketing objectives.[1] It found what we instinctively know to be true. Television is more suited to the brand objective of creating awareness. Magazines are

better for promoting consideration. Newspapers and the Internet are more used in driving traffic or purchase intent (see Figure 9.2).

TOUCH POINT SELECTION CRITERIA

A number of tools are available to steer and measure the decision-making. But selecting touch points requires making judgments to anticipate how individual campaigns need to be communicated. We must constantly evaluate how the selected touch points leverage the campaign's creative messaging and the use of media.

At this part of the planning stage, putting the money in the right buckets is more important than execution. This stage takes a first pass at effectiveness evaluation and determining the broad tactical use of media. Once these are known, then the specifics of how to implement each medium are developed. So, for example, step one is to select television, determine the budget, and set the primary television goals. In step two, the planner and broadcast team determine which stations, time periods,

FIGURE 9.2

Marketing Objectives and Media Vehicles

Source: Bain/IAB Marketer Survey; Bain Media 3.0 Study.
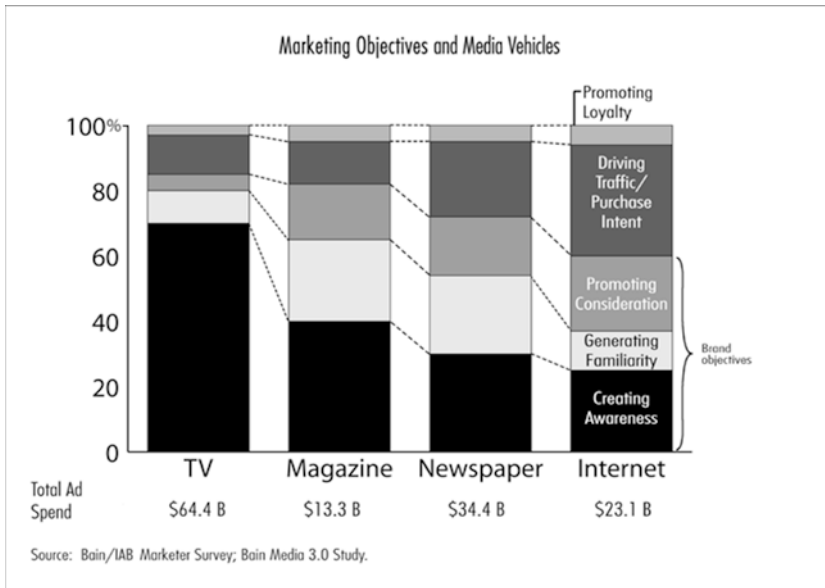
CASE STUDY: PICKWICK AFTERNOON SPIRIT—ANALYZING THE MEDIA MIX

Sara Lee International developed a campaign for their tea brand Pickwick. A new variant, Pickwick Afternoon Spirit, was an herbal blend based on natural ingredients (including peppermint, chamomile, and licorice), which was launched over a 15-week campaign in the Netherlands. The three chief objectives for the advertising campaign were to increase unaided product awareness, proposition awareness, and purchase intent.

The media mix for this campaign consisted of television (43%), print with sampling (48%), and online (8%). Daphne Communication Management executed cross-media research via a weekly online questionnaire measuring the impact of this campaign against the identified metrics.

It's rare to see such well-defined forensics of a media mix. So I've included the findings to give the reader more awareness of how each medium influenced the effectiveness of the overall campaign.

The campaign was a success, as illustrated by the campaign results: Product awareness increased 36 percent. Purchase intent increased 35 percent. Proposition awareness increased 20 percent.[2]

TELEVISION

Television was effective at generating awareness about the new product introduction. The largest build-up of awareness was achieved during the first television flight. It, however, did not communicate the product proposition of Pickwick Afternoon Spirit.

PRINT

The print campaign on its own was not as effective as the other media at driving any of the campaign metrics. This was largely attributed to the creative execution. However, in the case of consumers who were exposed to either the television or online and print, awareness and purchase intent increased significantly. Thanks to samples, print achieved product trial, but a high level of frequency was needed.

ONLINE

Online was by far the most cost-effective medium. It made an especially large contribution on cognitive elements such as brand knowledge. It also played well

in tandem with print and television. Daphne concluded that spreading the Internet campaign over many weeks to reach a larger audience with a low contact frequency helped the brand.

CONCLUSIONS AND INSIGHTS

Awareness of brand and proposition of Pickwick Afternoon Spirit rose significantly thanks to a positive transfer of message in television commercials and online. At the start of the campaign there was a less obvious transfer of message in print advertisements. However, there was a large increase of buying intention and buying behavior during the campaign.

OVERALL LEARNING

Different media offered different benefits: television drove awareness and brand metrics. Magazines prompted response and action. Online drove brand familiarity. The combined media mix drove brand measures. Creativity in each medium is still a strong factor in value of communication. The impact of frequency is harder to judge and is different by media.

and activation tactics will be employed to meet the goals and to maximize efficiency.

THREE INPUTS BEHIND TOUCH POINT SELECTION

Three inputs determine the selection process: data, consumer insight, and communication needs (Figure 9.3). These three inputs provide complementary or contradictory forces in making selection decisions. For example, response data may prove that search is a more targeted medium for delivering acquisitions, but if there is a brand problem with consideration, television might be a better choice.

Touch point selection calls for making trade-offs based on what the campaign needs to do and therefore what is more important. Each campaign is going to be a balance of these three factors.

FIGURE 9.3

Touch Point Selection Criteria
Three Main Inputs

DATA
Market-Mix Modeling
Performance Marketing
Audience Reach &
Frequency

CONSUMER INSIGHT
Culture & Media Consumption
Receptivity Insights
Customer Segmentation
Cross-media studies

Touch Point
Selection
Criteria

COMMUNICATION ROLE
Stage of Consumer Pathway
Amplify the central communicating idea
Create differentiation and cut through

DATA-LED DECISION-MAKING

Investment decisions need to be supported by good data. Many clients want to see analytic rigor and fact-based recommendations. The communications planning world draws on three main sources: market-mix (or econometric) modeling, performance marketing, and media audience–based data. The different levels and degrees of robustness of the data, as well as stability of variables in future planned marketing, dictate the level of confidence in these sources.

MARKET-MIX MODELING

Market-mix, or econometric, modeling has been used by marketers since the seventies. It's the gold standard, particularly for high-spending,

regular-purchase products. Market-mix modeling gives specific measurement on which media delivers better return on investment (ROI) to sales. It helps determine and fine-tune the channel or media mix. The communications planner uses modeling to shift dollars toward the more efficient media and places that deliver higher ROI. The approach tends to work best when marketers' conditions are stable and there is consistent spending that provides lots of data points.

PERFORMANCE MARKETING

Data-based planning helps determine the consumer's response to advertising. This is most obvious in direct response campaigns that prompt consumers to visit a site or dial a number. Performance marketing provides very specific data such as click-through rates or the level of audience interaction.

Performance metrics are rapidly becoming the most significant media currency. Capturing behavior gives a richer understanding of the engagement and value to an advertiser. It also provides more real-time data for targeting, testing, adjusting, and improving the response of the media plan. This responsiveness has greatly increased media's ability to deliver greater accountability.

Performance marketing is most significant in digital and direct response media, but it will fast move into other media forms. For example, smartphones, tablets, interactive television, and social media platforms are used as direct response media.

REACH AND FREQUENCY

Reach and frequency remain standard measures of a media outlet's breadth of impact. *Reach* measures the coverage that each channel delivers; *frequency* is how often a person is exposed to an advertising message. They continue to be universal means to gauge the delivery of the message and therefore potential influence on awareness, involvement, and consideration goals.

EFFECTIVENESS, EFFICIENCY, SCALE

Optimedia's head of analytics, Rudy Grahn, describes what planners need to consider in selecting touch points: "You need to be evaluating effectiveness, efficiency and scale."[3]

Effectiveness refers to judging the media's ability to influence the consumer or create a response. So the emphasis is on the level of exposure, engagement of the impressions or, in the case of online, the click-through rate or cost of sales. Different research techniques have their own ways to define effectiveness, but usually an almost limitless number of different methodologies and currencies quantify a medium's potential engagement or quality of exposure. We elaborate on this further in chapter 12, "Measurement and Metrics."

Efficiency refers to the relative cost effectiveness of the media: the cost per thousand (CPM) impressions, cost per click, or cost per sale. Efficiency is fairly simple to measure once effectiveness is quantified.

Scale, the third factor, refers to the overall communication or marketing goals. If a company wants to sell one million units, then the most cost-effective or efficient medium may not be sufficient. To break that point down a little further: online may be the most cost-efficient medium to acquire customers. Creating awareness through television may not be as efficient and may require significant initial ad-production costs and be less measurable. However, television may ensure achieving critical mass in the product trial and take-up. That's one big reason why major advertisers aren't putting 100 percent of their budget into online even if the data suggests this is more cost effective. Advertisers need a combination of media to achieve their goals.

CONSUMER-INSIGHT-LED TOUCH POINT SELECTION

Chapter 7 discusses the Central Communications Platform, developed from consumer insight and guiding touch point selection and use.

Receptivity is also an important input in determining touch point selection. Chapter 8 shows how we could select media by exploiting receptivity of the messaging through use of context-based insights.

A third area of insight comes from employing cross-media studies.

CROSS-MEDIA STUDIES

Surveys such as MRI and Simmonds in the United States; or TGI, which operates in 67 countries internationally; or EGM in Latin American countries are syndicated single-source research databases that combine media consumption with product and brand usage and consumer attitudes. They allow some cross-media comparisons that can be used in touch point selection. Development of different research techniques provides better science to support the judgment of the communications planner. Here is a selection of some of the more progressive tools.

IPA TOUCHPOINTS INITIATIVE

The IPA TouchPoints Initiative was created and designed for UK communications agencies. I sat on the IPA Media Futures Group that sponsored this industry-wide initiative, but much of the credit goes to Lynne Robinson, research director at the IPA, for spearheading this study.

Its primary objective is to give communication strategists insight into how people are using the increasingly wide range of media available to them and how this usage fits into their lifestyles. IPA TouchPoints was designed as a stand-alone survey that allows integration of other media research currencies and surveys. It measures all media usage, including television, print, radio, Internet, social networking, search, and mobile usage. It also looks at retail activity, what people are doing, and their mood. For example, sports betting company Coral used the database to determine that readers of the *Mail on Sunday* read the paper while also watching sports on television. Thus Coral knew this combination of media would be extremely relevant and consumers highly receptive to its advertising message.

The study provides cross-media data to help intermedia decision-making. It collects the data on PDAs, allowing live reporting of consumer habits rather than the inconsistent diary method. This very successful format is being adopted in several other countries, including the United States.

MEDIADNA

MediaDNA is a system that was developed initially in the United King-dom and was conceived by Frank Harrison, global head of strategic re-sources at ZenithOptimedia. It later became an industry-wide tool. The system selects media brands according to their brand personality. A planner could select a magazine or a television show on the basis of whether it was perceived as innovative or intelligent. Defining brand personalities enables media and brand matchmaking for brands that want to use media vehicles to develop or reinforce certain brand qualities. For instance, *Cosmopolitan* might be seen by readers as "confident" or "brash," qualities that might pair well with a cosmetics brand hoping to own those same attributes.

SELECTING TOUCH POINTS BASED ON COMMUNICATIONS ROLE

THE CONSUMER PATHWAY

The main questions to ask when determining the communications role are: What stage of the Consumer Pathway are we trying to target? How will we amplify the Central Communications Platform? How will this create differentiation?

Figure 9.4 gives a visual estimation of different media and their rela-tive impact at different stages of the Consumer Pathway. I say estimation because these are only generalizations based on common use. This estima-tion helps determine the different role each touch point needs to play in the overall campaign. Going back to Pickwick Afternoon Spirit, televi-sion's role was to generate awareness. Online's was to drive knowledge that would aid consideration. Magazine's role was to deliver trial and use. Each medium needs to have a specific and defined role to play in the overall communications plan.

The Buitoni case illustrates our touch-point strategy of selecting media by clearly defining their communication roles. It shows how we combined consumer insight with the communication goal to formulate a touch-point strategy. We first had to increase involvement by amplifying

FIGURE 9.4
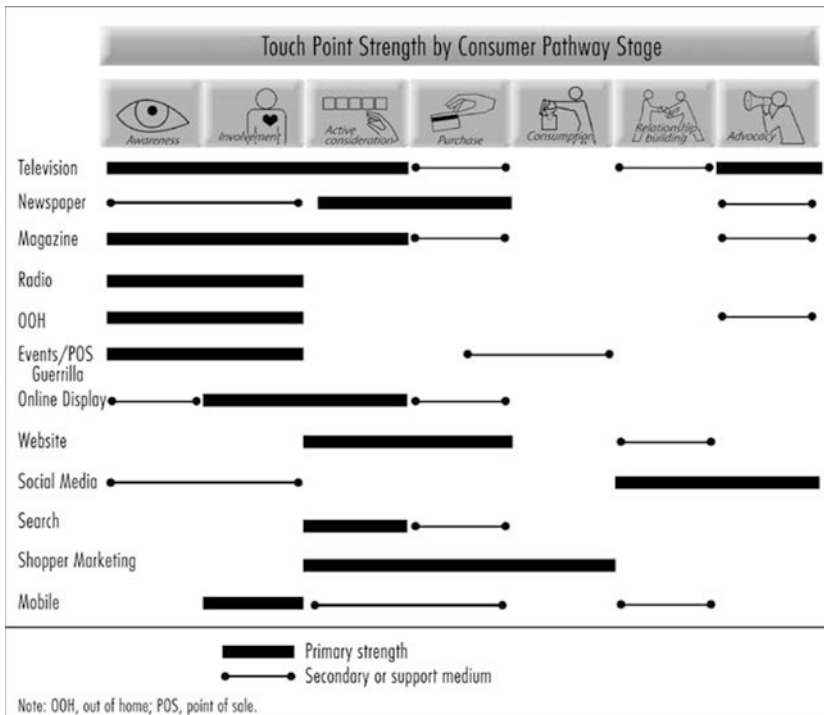
the creative idea through a very specific media selection, and then we drove active consideration by tapping into touch points that influenced the shopper close to the time of purchase.

CREATING DIFFERENTIATION AND CUT-THROUGH

The Brand Media Strategy must take into account the competitive context.

If every car company advertises in the same car magazines, on the same websites, and in the same Super Bowl, because "that's where car drivers are," their ads won't be effective. The Brand Media Strategy should look different from its rivals. And that's why, for communications planning, exceptions are often the rule. So while there are established places and best-practice uses of media (for example, television for awareness, newspapers for retail, online for information), a planner needs to balance that with thinking outside the box in order to break through.

A great example, and one of my favorite media campaigns, was the long-running outdoor advertising campaign of the *Economist* magazine. The billboard ads, with simple white type on a red background resembling the *Economist*'s masthead, contained humorous headlines, such as "I don't read the *Economist*—management trainee, aged 42."

When promoting a magazine to business readers, the data would have sent the *Economist* to advertise in the obvious spaces, for example, other business magazines, financial pages of newspapers, possibly in airports, in-flight areas and hotels—exactly where the *Economist*'s competitors advertised. The *Economist* opted instead for a broad outdoor campaign that stood out and delivered the message creatively and with absolute consistency. The differentiation of their strategies made sure there was clear space and distinctiveness in their media campaigns. This campaign consistently delivered increased subscription growth for the *Economist*.

INFLUENCE AND CLUTTER

One analysis I like to use to help steer touch-point selection is the influence-clutter analysis. Plotting media on a grid ranking influence (which could be reach, engagement, audience appeal, or whatever measure a planner decides is important) and clutter (concentration of advertising by category) gives a good opportunity to develop a touch-point selection strategy.

Figure 9.5 shows an influence-clutter analysis for a brand in the automotive category. It ranks a medium by its influence, in this case media composition, or the concentration of the brand's prime target audience each medium draws. It also tracks each medium in terms of level of competitor spending. Media fall into four quadrants (see Figure 9.6).

The influence-clutter analysis identifies, selects, and determines how to exploit touch points on the basis of what's happening in the category.

In this example, cable television and business publications are influential but heavily used by all the competition. We recommended lifestyle publications to this client, which were as influential as business publications but had the benefit of having few or no competitors in them. This gave the brand plan some clear space to help them stand out.

FIGURE 9.5

Composition — Clutter Analysis

High Composition

Requires innovative execution

- Auto Websites
- Business Mags
- WSJ
- Cable TV — Golf
- News Mags
- Network Prime
- Network Golf
- Men's Lifestyle Mags
- Active Lifestyle Mags
- NY Times
- Cable TV — Movies
- Network Drama
- Cable TV — Documentaries
- Epicurean & Sports Mags
- Cable TV — Entertainment
- Automotive Mags
- Cinema
- Travel Mags
- Cable TV — News
- Travel Websites
- Network NCAA Tournament
- MSN Live
- Stocks & Shares Websites
- Sports Websites

Best opportunity to differentiate

Most Cluttered

AVERAGE

- Cable Reality
- Network TV Golf
- Cable TV — MLB
- Long Tall Websites

Least Cluttered

- Network TV Late Night
- Network TV Late Night
- Cable TV — College Basketball
- MySpace

Use for low cost reach

Test higher use or stop using

Low Composition

FIGURE 9.6

Influence — Clutter Quadrants

Influence	Category Clutter	Potential Tactics
High	High	Need to probably use, but it is important to differentiate
High	Low	Look to exploit, opportunity to differentiate
Low	High	Avoid or use to deliver efficient reach and frequency
Low	Low	Try to test or avoid

OTHER FACTORS A PLANNER NEEDS TO CONSIDER

CREATIVE INPUT

Touch-point selection should be initially led by the communications planners, but as with most things in the communications process, the final plan is a collaborative effort. Importantly, the initial recommendation draws from data and insights into how the media channels interact and reach their audiences. Then the Brand Media Strategy is fine-tuned and developed by the communications planner alongside the creative and account planners.

USE OF NONTRADITIONAL MEDIA

Much of our discussion on touch points has centered on mass media or digital media, but they're not the only options. Some brands have ignored media advertising altogether.

A good example of a brand that built itself without the help of traditional media is Red Bull. The energy drink has turned experiential media into an art form. The brand avoided traditional media, instead sponsoring alternative events such as the Red Bull Flugtag, an air show event. I was in Paris in 2009 with other agency colleagues. Red Bull had just been launched in the French market after having been banned from being sold there. A bar's television ran a continuous video of the multiple extreme sports events that Red Bull is involved with. It made for compelling content that kept us glued to the screen. It was an incredibly effective example of owned media playing a strong role at a key distribution venue.

FEWER, BIGGER, BETTER

The growing list of touch points available leads to planners often trying to incorporate just too many touch points into a plan.

Too many media outlets dilute the messaging and impact the budget as production costs increase. Spreading a campaign thinly across media makes it harder to cut through and reduces frequency, which is important

for effectiveness. It also reduces leverage with media vendors. My advice is to be more strategic and make an active decision about which media will make the biggest difference.

Selecting touch points is a process that requires the plan to be focused and the planner to make good trade-offs. Touch-point selection should be deliberate, to pinpoint the right ones.

DEFINING THE ROLE OF TOUCH POINTS IN THE COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

Once the touch points have been identified, the next stage is to clearly articulate their role. This guides the specialist activation teams in developing better tactical solutions in media.

Different touch points can perform multiple potential roles in the Brand Media Strategy. A medium can perform many tasks. Take television as an example. Television is strongly suited for efficiently and effectively generating awareness of new products or a new brand feature. It can increase brand involvement through sponsorship, build familiarity through product placement, or drive more product understanding through advertising spots. Television can increase brand consideration by promoting a competitive claim, sending consumers to a website for more information or boosting foot traffic to a store with a special promotion. Television can also directly sell a product through long-form telemarketing response campaigns. And we all know that if an ad hits the screen during the Super Bowl, it can drive word of mouth or get people to go online. Online, print, radio, out-of-home, mobile, and nontraditional media can all play numerous roles for brands. For the Brand Media Strategy to work, the planner needs to specify how to activate each touch point.

The UPS "Whiteboard" campaign a few years back demonstrates this point nicely.[4] The creative involves a spokesperson simply writing on a whiteboard. The brand used television to create launch-level brand awareness with high reach and frequency. It was a very visual campaign. They wanted to amplify the whiteboard device, so they featured sportscasters using a whiteboard to explain complicated plays on television, financial analysts using a whiteboard to analyze the market, and television

networks creating animated whiteboard introductions and summaries of programs.

Online video was the strongest platform for the "Whiteboard" idea to demonstrate the brand campaign, and online search was used to drive traffic and customers to their website.

In print, UPS needed to get to core business customers but also to amplify the creative idea. The video component of "Whiteboard" has a strong revelation moment when the solution provided by UPS is unveiled to the consumer. To achieve the same feeling of revelation in print, they took alternate space such as bookend units in the *Wall Street Journal,* flap pages in the small-business magazine *Inc.,* and consecutive half-page spreads in *BusinessWeek.*

They selected very targeted, high-reach, out-of-home vehicles designed to surprise their business targets by communicating to them in ways UPS had not in years past. They included train and bus station sites in New York City and three-dimensional billboards on commuter arteries.

The results of the Brand Media Strategy were very positive. Awareness not only grew but also eroded much more slowly than expected once the flight was over, showing the impact of these tactics. Site traffic exceeded UPS's expectations, with thousands of actions taken on the site.

QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN MAKING
TOUCH POINT SELECTIONS

1. Does the mix have the right balance between reach, engagement, and efficiency?
2. Do the recommended touch points amplify the Central Communications Platform?
3. How do the touch point selections differentiate compared with the competition?
4. Are there clearly defined communication roles or outcomes for each touch point?

GETTING SOCIAL

CONNECTING THROUGH SOCIALLY ENABLED COMMUNICATIONS

When Michael Mendenhall, the then-chief marketing officer of Hewlett Packard, at the ANA 2008 CMO conference[1] proclaimed Twitter as one of the most influential media, I have to admit I almost fell off my chair. The social networking site back then was just starting to take off as one of the more promising players trying to emulate Facebook's success. At that time, it had 3 million users, up from barely half a million just at the start of that year. While I'm not sure whether Twitter really lived up to Mendenhall's billing, social media, or Web 2.0, as we were calling it back then, was starting to hit its stride. Twitter evolved from being a tool for real-time updates for celebrities and the everyman or everywoman, to broadcasting pointed comments during presidential debates and add-ons to the Super Bowl hype, to being a journalist's best friend and a distributor of television content. Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Blogger, Tumblr, Pinterest, Instagram, Four Square, Google+, and the many social media channels have evolved in remarkable ways and become an important ally for the communications planner.

WHY DOES SOCIAL MEDIA
NEED ITS OWN CHAPTER?

If social media needs its own chapter, why not a separate chapter for television or print? Certainly, both of these media channels will continue to dominate media plans for many years to come. Or what about mobile, which is now eclipsing the PC as the preferred device for the Internet? A deep understanding of social is an absolute necessity in completing a planner's skill set. Here's why it's particularly important right now.

First, the growth in use and users has been significant since I completed the first edition of this book in late 2010. The reach of social media networks as media branding opportunities is now very substantial, moving social media from being just a small niche channel talking to a handful of potential influencers to conversing with audiences at scale. When Facebook launched their "TV product" in 2013, they talked about delivering an audience three times the size of a Super Bowl spot.[2]

Second, the consumers that many marketers are particularly chasing are engaging social media more than the general population. Millennials, women, Hispanics,[3] and fast-growing economies such as China, Russia, Latin America (LATAM), and southern and eastern Europe are renowned early and fast adopters of social media.[4] Understanding how to work with the media channels with which these important consumer groups are more engaged is critically important.

Third, all media have in effect become social media channels. They've had to, to help them find audiences and engage them more effectively. Newspapers have become news brands that break stories on Twitter. Cable networks rely on their network of fans to launch shows. In 2012, the shows of the US broadcast television network FOX garnered 30.9 million social comments.[5]

As I mentioned earlier, much of what communication planners are concerned with is how we help influence consumers about brands. The scale, depth, and media spillover into social channels has become an integral piece of the brand and media strategy. In many cases it could be the driving force in the communications strategy.

SOCIAL MEDIA IS THE TIP OF THE SPEAR IN
CHOOSING OR CONSIDERING BRANDS

In the "Consumer Pathway" (chapter 3), we talked about the different roles that media play in influencing brand choice and use. Social can and should play an influential role in building active consideration as well as advocacy. Those are the most obvious and proven roles that social can play. But brands are employing many more tactics that can be applied to every stage of the Consumer Pathway.

As the media continues to shift, and consumer behavior evolves, social media is becoming a principle medium to drive and support the brand media strategy.

ZERO MOMENT OF TRUTH (ZMOT)

Jim Lecinski of Google introduced a disruptive idea in the past few years that he termed the "Zero Moment of Truth."[6] It was based on the observation that shopper behavior has changed, and that decisions about brands aren't being made in a linear fashion as depicted by the popular purchase funnel that marketers embraced in the past. The Zero Moment of Truth is a modification of the Procter and Gamble marketing mantra conceived in the golden A.G. Lafley era, when the packaged-goods marketer evangelized on "winning at the two moments of truth"—the first at the point of purchase, and the second when consumers use the product.

Lecinski observed that digital and social media channels have become an important means for people to research and evaluate a company's products and services. Consumers in fact have changed their pattern of decision-making dramatically, increasingly deciding on and switching their opinion of brands or products before they step into a store, talk to a sales representative, or visit an e-commerce site. Hence the "Zero" moment of truth refers to the stage before the "first" and "second" moments of truth.

Increasing access to the Web and mobile devices was already turning consumers into relentless, round-the-clock product researchers and into amazingly fickle consumers. A study conducted by Google Inc. and

Shopper Sciences[7] shows that the number of sources consulted by consumers before a purchase has nearly doubled since 2009, from 5.3 to 10.4 from social media sources. That is, comparison sites, ratings and reviews, comments on social media channels, and user videos on YouTube are becoming a more go-to resource and are changing consumers' decisions on a brand with dramatic effect.

To illustrate this development, I can share a personal experience. My wife and I were in the market a few years ago for a washer and dryer. We started off with the intention to replace our Maytag set with updated models. After a recommendation from some colleagues, however, we switched our search to a Whirlpool. We visited its website and settled on a model. But we then surveyed a myriad of consumer-review sites—Consumer Reports, Good Housekeeping, and then Best Buy with its comments and ratings—and we found question marks related to the model's reliability. We also discovered several alternatives, which caused us to finally settle on an LG set. According to the Google study, this scenario is very much playing out across multiple brands and categories.

INCREASING SOCIAL'S UTILITY FOR BRANDS

According to consumer insights company Compete, consumers who choose to "follow" a brand on Twitter are 56 percent more likely to purchase it. Similar numbers were recorded on Facebook. Social media's ability to drive purchase is increasing.

Social commerce ventures such as Groupon and LivingSocial use the power of crowdsourcing to help drive shopper interest. S-Commerce is increasingly being talked about as a growing opportunity.

Social media has now eclipsed email in terms of use, surpassing email in number of users.

Social media's ubiquity as a destination and interaction for entertainment and media consumption has reached critical mass. According to ComScore, Facebook users spend an average of six and a half hours a month on their desktop, and an additional eight hours on mobile with the platform. That's the equivalent of about 20 percent of people's time on a PC and 30 percent of their time on a mobile phone.

As a result, marketers are now seeing that a more effective and certainly more efficient tactic is not to drive users to their own brand website, but rather to build their brand experience inside a social medium's environment. The cost of interrupting people from what they're doing online to go to a company's site for purposes beyond e-commerce is giving way to brand experiences in the social ecosystem.

For example, the Oreo campaign to celebrate the company's one hundredth anniversary recorded 189,000 uniques on their Facebook page, whereas Oreo's brand website for the same campaign recorded just 6,000 uniques.

Google's strategy in building up its Google+ platforms upped the stakes on social's importance for marketers. They decided that Google+ activity by users and those they're connected to through Google+ would determine the algorithms behind their personalized search results. So if a friend on your social graph comments, shares, or pluses brands and sites in the category you are searching for, then they are more likely to appear toward the top of your organic search listings.

IS SOCIAL A STRATEGY?

Early on, marketers talked about social as an important strategy. As our understanding of social media's value and the roles it can play for brands has matured, so too has our thinking. While social media campaigns can be very strategic, and a brand media strategy can and often will be social-led, in my view it's wrong to refer to social as a strategy. Social is a venue, and various social channels can play an important role in marketing, brand, or media programs.

BUDDYING UP WITH THE SOCIAL PLANNER

A communications planner needs to really understand and know how to employ social media as part of its campaigns. The best planners I know are not only conversant in social but are constantly driving ideas and closely partnering with social media teams. In many cases, as I mentioned, social should be central to the strategy, and when we discuss the central

communications idea or platform, it is almost a prerequisite that it has some social aspect to it.

Separating social from the paid media is a mistake. However, in practice, this remains a challenge as there are often separate teams and in many cases agencies charged with handling these responsibilities. Many times, separate departments exist within client companies, which makes it more difficult to connect the functions.

As a result, social is often put in a different category from media. Social media capabilities can and often sit in all the various agencies . . . creative, digital, PR, and media. Sometimes social is done by a stand-alone specialist social agency. The lines in social quickly blur, somewhat driven by agencies' desire to land grab.

I believe that social today is very much where digital was a decade earlier. While the industry and clients choose to compartmentalize, social in my view doesn't belong in one agency or as a separate division. All marketing disciplines need to activate social conversations and utilize social media. If they do not, they're not exploiting the full potential of their channel. Worse, they aren't being relevant in terms of how consumers communicate and engage. It's important that the communications planner be an active bridge to the social team, and be a solid contributor to the social strategy and how that should connect, drive, or amplify the media campaign.

WHAT ABOUT A FACEBOOK OR A TWITTER STRATEGY?

In the early days of social media, I hosted a client conference and invited representatives of Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and MySpace to participate on a panel together and debate how marketers were working with them. I'm not sure these days if that would ever take place given the huge competitiveness of these companies. But it was early on, so there was a small and friendly community in Silicon Valley, and no site was really pulling in large marketing dollars. If anything, they were all just trying to grow the total social media pie. What resonated with me most about the different social media players was the premise of why people chose to sign up to each network.

For Facebook, it was about sharing content with selected friends. Twitter, on the other hand, was essentially a broadcast medium. LinkedIn was a professional networking site to business partners or employers. And MySpace back then was a music-sharing site. The relationship between the platforms and their communities was very different, and how a brand needs to think about how to deploy them had to be different.

CEO and cofounder of Vayner Media, Gary Vaynerchuk, thinks most people treat social media as a "distribution channel." He says, "[brands need] to learn to natively storytell on each platform and respect the psychology of what makes a Facebook user different from a Pinterest user and more different still than an Instagram user."[8] He sees enormous value in recognizing and developing campaigns to those channels as individual audiences instead of thinking about them collectively.

So, to take a single approach to social couldn't be more wrong. Developing bespoke or organic programs is a very important aspect of effectively engaging these channels and the communities. In truth, then, there is a need to have a separate Facebook program from Twitter. The important point is that the different tactics ladder up to a broader communications strategy or idea.

SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING

A couple of important events took place at Facebook that were to change the face of the social media landscape. First, in 2012, Facebook finally announced it would launch its initial public offering (IPO) and become a publically traded company on the Nasdaq Stock Exchange. From that point on, just having a billion users wasn't enough. The company had to figure out very quickly how they would monetize that audience to generate and grow revenue to support their very hefty valuation. The second event, not unrelated, had taken place about six months earlier with Facebook's introduction to marketers of the EdgeRank. The EdgeRank was the Facebook version of Google's Page Rank, an algorithm that determined which and how often friend updates would appear on your personal newsfeed. People with whom you interacted would appear more regularly on your newsfeed. That EdgeRank also applied to brand pages. So if you had once

liked the Starbucks page, and never went back to the page or liked other content, then it would cease to appear on your newsfeed, despite their posting content. Facebook claimed that the reason for EdgeRank's introduction was to ensure a better user experience by personalizing the feeds even more and filtering out the noise.

This almost instantly changed social media strategies for brands. Instead of collecting additional new fans, brands had to think more about how to keep them engaged and bring them back to their page. It was also revealed that only about 16 percent of fans that had liked the brand page were regularly seeing their updates on their newsfeed.[9] This encouraged brands to employ paid advertising on Facebook to its existing fans, and others to return to the page or engage in other content.

The focus on driving advertising revenue has become the model for the established social media companies to pursue. Facebook introduced its Sponsored Stories and video ads, Twitter its Promoted Tweets and Trends, and YouTube its branded channels and increased the level of preroll ads on its videos. Given the different communities and formats, often the ad formats are native to the site itself, which has fueled an entire category of advertising referred to as native advertising.

This development has shifted the focus of the social media companies' attention more closely to that of the traditional media agencies and digital media teams in agencies as they focus on delivering and selling advertising products. Social media agencies and teams have had to focus more on media alongside strategy and content services. The comms planner now needs to consider both organic and paid social media tactics within the broader digital and media communications mix.

EVERY MEDIA COMPANY IS A SOCIAL MEDIA COMPANY

As social media companies begin to act more like traditional media companies, the reverse is also the case. In fact, established cable and broadcast networks have been the early adopters and built some of the most successful brands in the social arena. Eight of the top ten Facebook brands in terms of number of *likes,* excluding celebrities, are media brands.[10] Television shows such as FOX Network's *Family Guy* has over fifty million likes.

Cable shows such as HBO's *True Blood* or AMC's *The Walking Dead* used social media to help launch their shows by sharing their content and activating their fans to create buzz. Facebook, Twitter, Reddit, StumbleUpon, and other social networks are now key drivers of traffic to the newspaper websites. According to Similarweb, nearly 10 percent of the *Washington Post*'s traffic is directly derived from social media sources,[11] which is only slightly below the 12 percent of traffic coming from search engines.[12] With limited marketing budgets of their own, social media, once seen as a threat to traditional media companies, is an essential channel for their existence.

SOCIAL MEDIA IS CREATING ADVOCATES OUT OF DETRACTORS

Rishad Tobaccowalla, chief innovation officer for VivaKi, shared with me an interesting perspective on communications strategy. He observed that it is often the case that marketers have targeted heavy users. But social media has allowed us to talk directly to heavy "influencers." Influencers fall into two categories . . . advocates and detractors. Detractors, that is, people who generally have a bad experience with a brand, speak about their experience eight times more often than people who have positive experiences, according to Tobaccowalla. Many readers will have heard the story of musician Dave Carroll, who looked out of a plane only to see the baggage handlers tossing his prized guitar. He recorded a song and video on YouTube that soon went viral, receiving global attention, as reported by CNN and many other television networks—a brand's worst nightmare. But other airline brands are using social media to turn a curse into a blessing. Jess Greenwood, now an executive at R/GA, tweeted about the awful music playing in the Air New Zealand airport lounge where she was waiting. Within minutes, she heard an announcement over the public address system asking that she identify herself. They then asked her, what music would she like to hear? That forever made her a fan of the airline.

When Fadra Nally's three-year-old son discovered a girl's toy in his Happy Meal, she tweeted, "*Oh @McDonald's. Do you know what it does to a little boy to find the Littlest Pet Shop in his Happy Meal instead of a superhero?*" A short while later, she got a tweet from a McDonald's representative

apologizing and asking his name and what superhero her boy didn't have. She received a personally handwritten note to her son, Evan, the elusive "Wolverine" figurine, and a dessert voucher. She subsequently blogged the story, with her happy son's picture with his Avengers figurine collection, and tweeted it to her 8,000+ followers.

Sometimes social media can be very unkind to brands. I've mentioned airlines. Telecom and cable operators are another category that regular receives customers' ire in the social sphere. Washers and dryers are other products for which few positive conversations are taking place. That's why I admire Whirlpool's approach. They host their Twitter page, and almost every entry or reference is a complaint. It might be that one of their machines has broken down or that deliveries have been delayed. You can imagine what would be written about them. Yet they answer every individual complaint in a very public forum on Twitter with a promise to follow up.

That level of individual and public response in social media is powerful brand media communications that can turn detractors into advocates and persuade other consumers who might be on the fence.

CREATING VIRAL HITS

One popular social media strategy is triggering viral social media programs. I've seen my fair share of them judging award entries at numerous festivals. Typically, they are developed by creative agencies. One good example, developed for Carlsberg in Belgium, involved filling a movie theater entirely full of burly, intimidating bikers and then filming unsuspecting couples looking for their seats. Most decided to walk away, but the couples who did sit down were welcomed with applause and on the screen popped a message, "That calls for a Carlsberg." The video was uploaded onto YouTube, and garnered 10 million views after just three months.[13]

This strategy is regularly employed for nonprofits. With little to no budget, these efforts are to be applauded, and they certainly go some way toward creating awareness if they are successful.

In truth, I'm not sure how much thinking behind a viral campaign comes from the communications planner. The idea and the content rule here. In truth, they are incredibly hard to consistently deliver. Just 0.3 percent of the videos on YouTube garner more than 10,000 views.

So the chances of hitting it viral are about the same as writing a best-selling novel of *Fifty Shades of Grey* proportions . . . very hard to count on or to plan for. I know of few agencies that are prepared to guarantee a viral hit to their client. If the budgets are low, then perhaps the risk is low, which is why we see nonprofits employ this approach.

Jonah Berger authored a very good book entitled "*Contagious—Why Things Catch On.*" I really recommend you read it to understand what it takes to create viral ideas. It's much more than just a social media or advertising book, as he shares many principles on what it takes to create marketing ideas that catch fire. He provides insight into Blendtec, a company with very little marketing budget that created a sensation with its YouTube videos blending iPhones. And he explains why Honey Nut Cheerios is able to create more word of mouth than Disneyland. Berger discusses his six STEPPS,[14] principles that are key ingredients to a contagious marketing idea:

CONTAGIOUS *STEPPS* PRINCIPLES BY JONAH BERGER

- Does the idea have **S**ocial Currency? Does sharing this idea or product make people look good?
- What **T**riggers or cues will make people think of the idea or product?
- Does talking about the idea generate **E**motion? Berger asks, how can you create awe and excitement or anxiety?
- **P**ublic—How does the product advertise itself?
- Does talking about the product offer **P**ractical value? In other words, does it help others?
- People remember **S**tories. How can your brand tell an interesting story that people can relay?

REAL-TIME SOCIAL

Perhaps a more repeatable tactic to drive social conversation is what we at Mindshare liked to refer as *Adaptive Planning*. This entailed a tactic to piggyback high-profile events and buzz. The trick here is being real time. During the London 2012 Olympics, the Nike team tapped into the

topicality of the different events. When individual athletes from different countries won medals, Nike and the agency teams would place ads acknowledging those achievements, running twenty-one thousand individual ads on Facebook during the 17 days of the games, sometimes within minutes of the events taking place. During the 2013 Super Bowl, when a power outage caused the stadium lights to go out for 30 minutes in the Mercedes Benz Super Dome stadium in New Orleans, Audi cheekily tweeted "Sending some LEDs to the @MBUSA Superdome right now . . ." They received nearly ten thousand retweets from other users. Planning and preparing response teams for event happenings are being planned for with social media SWAT teams on the ready.

HOW AMEX BUILT THEIR BRAND BY ACTIVATING "SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY"

BACKGROUND

Small businesses are important customers for American Express. The economy was proving a challenge for small businesses that were competing with the larger retailer chains, especially during the holiday season. Small businesses heavily rely on the six-week holiday shopping season, which accounts for 25–30 percent of their annual sales.

The traditional US holiday shopping season kicks off the day after Thanksgiving Day on what is known as Black Friday, when big discounts are promoted alongside early store openings. The e-tailers follow that weekend with Cyber Monday, promoting deals online. To promote small businesses in local communities, the American Express marketing team came up with the brilliant idea to promote the Saturday between Black Friday and Cyber Monday as "Small Business Saturday." The objective of the promotion was to rally support for small businesses and galvanize consumers to "shop small," and in doing so strengthen their brand with this important group.

Television was deployed along with local radio, print, and online support to ensure the local-ness was maintained. This helped to drive awareness levels up to nearly 40 percent.

But at the heart of the campaign was social media.

Using the power of Facebook, they were able to mobilize small businesses and galvanize the community to embrace Small Business Saturday.

They made available on Facebook a Small Businesses toolkit for local shops to be able to download art work to create badges and posters to put up in their stores. They provided a tool online to build video ads on YouTube, and tools to help them build their own Facebook page promoting their own Small Business Saturday program and providing online deals through FourSquare, a localized social media platform.

The results were staggering. According to John Hayes, American Express' CMO, the campaign created a community, with 1.5 million people liking the campaign on Facebook, which in turn generated visibility of the campaign to over 100 million people. Small Business Saturday became a top-ten trending topic on Twitter, and the businesses that participated saw a 28 percent increase in sales versus the same day the year before.[15]

Social media served as a rallying point, allowing supporters to comment, engage, and share. This included sharing where they planned to shop.

SOCIAL AND CONTENT

In truth, social media is *all* about content—content the brand creates, content third parties such as media and various publishers are creating, or content that users create. It's the media platforms that create the opportunity to share that content. So behind every *social media* strategy is a necessary *content* strategy. The approach to content is going to be very different from the advertising creative messaging. Advertising is about driving high reach and frequency of the advertising messages. That's why ad agencies spend significant resources in determining what exactly that messaging should be. Production is high because of the high level of frequency that the creative needs in order to stand. And because of the high cost of media, literally every second counts as marketers and the creative teams at the agency scrutinize every frame of a 30- or 15-second spot. The one key advantage, however, is that you do have 100 percent control of the message.

The key differences with content behind a social media program are that in many cases you can't or shouldn't control the messaging. If the success of social is defined by the volume of content that is shared, then messages that are overly brand driven or commercial in nature are less interesting for people. The nature of social media is that the audience of each individual message is going to be smaller and, in general, the frequency is likely to be once or perhaps a few times a best. On the other hand, because one isn't paying by the second or by the column inch, there is an opportunity to get longer durations and create more depth. There's also a need for more content. So if you want fans to consistently return to your Facebook brand page, then ideally posting new content three to four times a week is going to be necessary to drive engagement and improve your EdgeRank. For Twitter, posting content multiple times each day is important. What is necessary is to find a content strategy that delivers this content effectively and cost efficiently. Most importantly, the content needs to deliver entertainment around the brand or brand message. Otherwise, it is unlikely to generate shareability.

FIGURE 10.1   DIFFERENCES REQUIREMENTS OF ADVERTISING CREATIVE VERSUS BRANDED CONTENT

	Advertising Creative	*Branded Content*
Message Control	High	Medium
Number of Content	Few key units	Multiple units
Production values	High level, costly	Cost effective
Creative	Brand Centric	Consumer Centric
Reach	High	Moderate
Frequency	High	1x frequency

CREATE, BUILD, AND BORROW CONTENT MODELS

For brands, the opportunity is to develop content that connects and builds engagement between brands and consumers. Different content approaches fall into three categories: create, build, or borrow.

CREATING ORIGINAL BRANDED CONTENT

This could take the form of video or display content.

Video-branded content has become a burgeoning opportunity. Creatives love it. In 2012, the Cannes Ad Festival awarded Chipotle's branded content campaign the Grand Prix Lion trophy. This campaign, which incorporated cinema, online, social media and advertised a spot during the televised coverage of the Grammy Awards show.

Chipotle, a Mexican restaurant chain that made its name selling burritos, didn't have the large-scale television budgets of their much bigger competitors, so they invest heavily in their social media programs.

Chipotle delivers a high-engagement social media strategy to their 1.7 million fans on social media. According to Mashable,[16] Chipotle responds to 83 percent of Facebook posts, while 90 percent of the company's activity on Twitter is responses to customers through @-mentions.

One of the differences on which Chipotle prides itself is supporting family farms over industrial farm factories. The company often sources ingredients from local farms that exhibit positive behavior toward animals and the environment. Chipotle's social media activity promotes this quality.

Chipotle developed a two-minute animated film featuring a farmer who turns his family farm into an industrial plant, but then recognizes his mistake. The film was set to Coldplay's "The Scientist," performed by Willie Nelson. They launched the campaign with just one screening of the music video during the Grammy Awards, which got enormous buzz on blogs, Facebook, and Twitter. The news media picked up the debate about sustainable farming practices, and the two-minute film received 6 million views on YouTube.[17]

BUILDING CONTENT WITHIN SOCIAL CHANNELS

Building content within Facebook and other social media platforms is necessary for brands looking to activate their follower or fan base. One of the best examples I've seen in recent times was the campaign that Oreo developed in 2012.

Oreo's Daily Twists

Oreo used the occasion of its one hundredth anniversary to launch a 100-day campaign on Facebook, Twitter, and Pinterest. They created images that used Oreos to represent current events and national celebrations, including the Mars Rover landing or the Fourth of July. Often the images were decided on and created the same day they were released on social sites. Oreo used topicality, for example, the NFL referee lockout ending or just fun events like Pirate Day, but always with Oreo cookies featured in the visual. It launched the first day with an Oreo that had a rainbow-colored stacked filling, instead of the single white cream one, to celebrate Gay Pride day on June 25. This got numerous tweets from celebrities such as Ellen DeGeneres, and a lot of play on the talk shows and mass media. Oreo's daily posts often earned thousands of shares. For the final post, they opened it up to the public to crowdshare ideas, created a shortlist of entries, produced them, and asked consumers to vote for the best one.

BORROWING CONTENT FROM MEDIA PUBLISHERS AND CONTENT PROVIDERS

With the necessity to constantly feed content to brand followers and fans on social channels, an increasingly popular tactic is to partner with media publishers or other content partners. This provides some obvious benefits for brands.

Leaning on the credibility of the media brand

HSBC Bank, while an enormous global financial services company, was not a well-known a brand in the US marketplace. They wanted to strengthen their credentials among small business enterprises that would be able to tap into their global resources and presence. To do that, HSBC developed "Business without Borders," an online platform that provided a resource for companies looking to expand their business internationally. At Mindshare, we developed advertising deals and content share partnerships with the *Wall Street Journal*, *The Economist* Intelligence Unit, and video content from Bloomberg Master Class. This content included articles on global business trends, business tools, case studies, and market analysis,

all complementing HSBC's own financial information and resources. The Business without Borders program also tapped into LinkedIn to extend HBSC's content and build a community to share information and create a more active dialogue among small businesses.

A cost-effective model to generate content

Media companies are looking to monetize their assets and expertise in creating efficient, original solutions for marketers. Media companies like AOL, which has access to a network of content providers to produce branded video and web content, is using these resources to attract media dollars. The *New York Post* set up a branded content team, carefully separating it from its core editorial team, to provide content that can live on its print, digital, and mobile platforms. Because media companies have scale and years of having honed their content capabilities, they are increasingly providing a valuable and willing source for brands.

Native advertising

Media companies are custom producing content that sits on their platforms that is integrated with their format and the feel of their platform. Native advertising, as it has more recently been referred to, could take the form of advertising or advertorial. The *Huffington Post* offered advertisers a service dubbed the "branded newsroom," which enables marketers to develop topical real-time content and post it on the news and entertainment site within a two-hour window of receiving the request. The media social-sharing site BuzzFeed produces bespoke content for brands. When we worked with them to promote Unilever's Axe campaign's television ad featuring an astronaut, they produced an editorial piece entitled "11 Pickup Lines Only Astronauts Can Use."

SUPPORTING SOCIAL CONTENT WITH PAID MEDIA

Original branded content or branded entertainment lends itself to social. To amortize the investment in production, branded content, in my experience, needs to have a media plan behind it. The social component is an important delivery mechanism not only to generate or extend its

reach but also to activate earned media. Often it is accompanied by a paid media plan. Display and search advertising are effective media in driving people to that content. There is a bundle of media companies that have also emerged in a sector to deliver digital content, such as companies like OutBrain or ShareThis. Such companies insert "native" links within the web pages of mainstream news and entertainment sites such as the NYTimes.com that lead to commercial branded content. While they are paid listings, they very much give the impression of being editorial links. They are charged on a cost-per-engagement basis and use browsing and historic search data of the individual users to customize the placements. Services like these complement placements on brands' social media sites and their own branded channel.

MEASURING SOCIAL

Questions about the value of a "like," the importance of a "share," and the quantifying of the impact of a social engagement continue to be asked. I very much suspect that opinion as well as the technology behind its analytics will continue to evolve. While proving the effectiveness within the channel is an important issue, what is more pertinent to communications planners is the value that social plays in determining the broader communications effort.

SOCIAL LISTENING TOOLS

There is a bundle of social listening tools (see chapter 12) that measure everything from sentiment, to volume of mentions, to breakdowns of conversations. They can provide a good snapshot and an indicator of what consumers are saying and thinking about a brand. Many of these tools are free and, while not as robust as more traditional consumer studies, they offer a good snapshot of the social conversation. Tracked over time, they can show trends or how communications and other events are able to shift.

I like word cloud tools, which provide a simple visualization of the volume of comments. It's a useful platform to engage clients on where

FIGURE 10.2

Two-thirds of Online Search Users Are Driven to Perform Searches as a Result of Exposure to Some Offline Channel. Both Television and Word of Mouth Influence Over One-third

Television ad	37%
Word of mouth from friend/acquaintance	36%
Magazine/newspaper ad	30%
Company's store/physical location	20%
Radio ad	17%
Billboard, indoor sports venue sign	9%
Ad/company name on company truck/van/car	7%
Ad/company name on taxi/train/city bus	3%
I have not performed a search on any of these	33%

*Note: Search is defined here as using a search engine to look for information about a company, product, service, or slogan

0%   5%   10%   15%   20%   25%   30%   35%   40%

Percentage of Online Search Users

Question: Within the last 6 months which of the following prompted you to go to a search engine to look for information on a particular company, product, service or slogan? (Select all that apply)

Source: iProspect Offline Channel Influence on Online Search Behavior Study

their brand is now, and what ideally, they would like the conversation to be. For one retail client, we did a series of word clouds on the social conversation of their brand. The biggest words—and, hence the most conversations taking place about their brand—were *sales,* "buy one get one free" (BOGO)"—rather than comments about fashion and appeal. This helped to bring a greater focus to where we wanted to better weight their media plan toward more product and brand messaging versus entirely promotional messaging, which it had been.

USING SOCIAL ANALYTICS TO STEER THE BRAND MEDIA STRATEGY

When so much of our role is about influencing consumer opinion and perception, then it goes without saying that social can be a valuable insights driver and help drive the media strategy. One of the advantages that

social media metrics provide is the real-time nature of this data, offering dynamic polling of consumers. Numerous companies have appeared on the scene and are taking this opportunity. One such company, Networked Insights, which analyzes social data, became a leading driver behind Samsung's communications strategy.[18] The initial data told them that Apple's iPhone dominated the buzz. It also showed that Samsung, relative to HTC and Motorola, just was not being considered versus the iPhone. Samsung chose to go head-to-head with Apple and use the social data to steer them into media and social channels that would insert them into the conversation versus Apple. They targeted high-profile media events, such as the Super Bowl, the Olympics, and the Grammys. They also were very reactive to daily news around Apple, and incorporated this into their Facebook and Twitter messaging and outreach to bloggers and forums. For example, when Apple chief executive officer Tim Cook revealed the new iPhone features, that prompted them to tailor their social messaging, pushing Samsung's advantage over the iPhone, and within a week Samsung had new television ads.

Social listening and analytics are becoming a valuable brand tool not just to react to brand and media communications but also direct them.

SOCIAL'S IMPACT ON THE BROADER ADVERTISING STRATEGY

There's no doubt that social media has become an increasingly influential marketing channel. The scale of Facebook, the broadcast capability and real-time immediacy of Twitter, the accessibility that YouTube has brought to video, the increasing visual culture perpetrated by the likes of Instagram and Pinterest are all contributing to a sharing culture. The legacy media have been early adopters of social as a necessary means to survive and remain relevant and current. Consumers have become the largest publishers and syndicators of content. The influence and volume of consumer opinion is shaping popular culture as well as influencing brand choice. Social's impact, however, goes beyond its role as a channel. It has caused brands to adopt a way of thinking about communications, where messaging needs to be *social by design* and media programs *social enabled.* Social and unpaid media have become *as* important a channel to distribute a brands story as

mass paid media. Influence + scale is an integral combination to drive the brand media strategy. This will continue to evolve, but will be a crucial element of broader marketing communications for years to come.

QUESTIONS TO ASK TO INTEGRATE SOCIAL INTO YOUR BRAND MEDIA STRATEGY

1. Who are the heavier influencers in this category? Where and how are they employing social media?
2. Should the brand grow fans/followers or engage them?
3. What content strategy is best suited to drive conversation and the brand?
4. Does the central communications platform have social currency?
5. How can social media amplify the core campaign?
6. How can paid media drive the reach of the social media plan?

EXECUTION IS THE X-FACTOR

BRINGING THE BRAND MEDIA STRATEGY TO LIFE

The most important part of a strategy is executing it. A good strategy with great tactics is always going to beat a great strategy with poor tactics. Consumers don't experience strategy; they see and hear the brand through media. They view a television spot, content on the Internet or a billboard on the highway, and they respond accordingly.

There's no room in the communications planner's world for fluffy ideas and theory. And while it's important to have a clearly identified outcome and a focused plan, what's crucial is how the Brand Media Strategy is activated in the media world. This chapter is dedicated to bringing the strategy to life. It explains how we execute strategies through media solutions and how to bring the activation ideas to life.

GETTING THE BEST WORK FROM YOUR MEDIA PARTNERS

At one point in my career, I left the media agency world to start a digital marketing venture, and I found myself in the role of selling to and performing services for media agencies for the first time. To be honest,

it was a bit of a shock to the system. The agencies we worked with supplied terrible briefs. There was little or no information or insight into the clients' business goals. No agency ever shared the brand's communications strategy or even indicated there was one. There were no key performance indicators; there was no communication of desired outcomes of the campaigns. There was little openness to adopting a different angle. The agencies just wanted a response to standard requests for proposals (RFPs).

And they wanted it yesterday—actually, last week. Most importantly, they wanted it at the lowest cost per thousand or cost per click possible.

If I had a dime for every time an agency planner or buyer said, "Can you bring us some innovative, never-been-done-before ideas," I could retire!

I developed a renewed respect for the professionalism of the women and men in the media sales community; they are better people than I. In the end, our sales director wisely started excluding me from meetings with media agencies. He told me it wasn't good for business to be telling agencies what they should or shouldn't be doing, even if I was right.

Many times the proposals went nowhere. In fact, a media vendor I recently spoke to told me that positive responses to RFPs happened less than 5 percent of the time. All those rejected RFPs seem such an unnecessary waste of time and resources for everyone.

By and large, agencies got the work they deserved. Maybe every once in a while they got something great, but they usually ended up with a cut-and-paste solution—hardly the ingredient for brilliant, award-winning, market-moving results. It was a shame because, as an outside vendor, we had the ability to help them do some amazing things.

FROM STRATEGY TO ACTIVATION

Once the Brand Media Strategy is developed, the next step is to translate it into an insightful brief for the activation teams—potential partners that are a source of ideas or assets that can help implement brand communications in paid, earned, or owned media forms.

They include the specialist teams at the agency, from media planning, to broadcast, print, and out-of-home media, as well as digital channel experts in display, search, social media, and mobile.

Specialist marketing channel experts and partners can also include event marketing, branded entertainment, custom content producers, stunt or live activations, and below-the-line efforts such as marketing PR and shopper marketing.

Media companies are part of a communications planner's activation team, as are the client's nominated agency partners, or internal integrated marketing teams. Those can include creative, digital, PR, and marketing activation people.

THE BRIEFING: GARBAGE IN, GARBAGE OUT

We've all heard that well-worn cliché "garbage in, garbage out." Well, the reason it's a cliché is because people keep using it. They keep using it because so often it's true.

The briefing provides the fuel for good ideas to take off. Too often, briefings are seen as a chore to get off the task list as expediently as possible. A briefing should be a source of inspiration and opportunity. It's the fun part of our business: a venue to create and innovate. But great work isn't a random exercise in ideation. It should be an important and well-orchestrated function at the agency.

The briefing to the activation teams should be wide enough to solicit a suitcase full of ideas but narrow enough to set out clear expectations of where to play and how to win.

Great communication ideas and brand media thinking come from collaboration and being disciplined about organizing people. Everyone can bring great ideas to the table, and most people want to contribute.

ACTIVATION IS A TWO-STEP PROCESS

Decide on the Central Communications Platform (or CCP) that anchors the plan. This allows the planner to develop the media activations. Does this

integrate the communications across multiple media channels? For instance, Pepsi's "Wake-up" campaign used the concept of "Stop the yawn" as its CCP.

Develop tactical programs with the activation teams that expand and support the central communicating platform. This involves developing ideas with the execution teams, as well as developing RFPs to brief partners. This includes work with digital and social media partners, branded entertainment companies, or experiential marketing companies to develop events or content. For example, when we worked with British Airways to promote flights to New Yorkers traveling to the UK, the creative campaign had the tag line "Go With Those Who Know." It was based on the idea that the experience of visiting a new country started as soon as you boarded the flight of that country's national carrier. For Americans the most notable thing was the pilot's and flight attendants' British accents. Our planning team came up with the CCP "Brit Speak." That provided a bunch of media placement opportunities across all media that we could leverage from this platform. We had out-of-home advertising, such as signs above a parking lot, saying "Car Park" in the British Airways type; "Tube" above subway stops; and they operated a British Airways-branded London cab that offered free rides in Manhattan. We ran newspaper ads with headlines such as "Footy" in the sports section, and "Scorcher" on the weather page. We even created an app that allowed people to send emails to their friends with British phrases. We were able to deliver an integrated campaign across all media, and the CCP provided the means to deliver a consistent integrated campaign that worked consistently with the creative.

DEVELOPING THE CENTRAL COMMUNICATIONS PLATFORM

The CCP idea is developed out of the consumer insight work, which we discussed in chapter 5.

There's no one right answer for how to establish the CCP. Here's a list of steps that I've found useful:

COME UP WITH MULTIPLE ALTERNATIVE CCP'S

It's easy to become married to just one platform and stick with it. But you need to have alternatives so you can leave a platform behind if it isn't strong enough or it's not executable or it's just unaffordable.

Having alternative ideas is the best way of testing the quality of the first idea, because more often than not, the first idea is not the best. I've seen it happen often: agencies get stuck on an idea, and their effort goes to selling it rather than testing its efficacy.

DON'T STOP AT THE A-HA MOMENT

An idea is never fully baked at the start. Look at ways to fine-tune it, evolve it, torture test it. Make the idea bigger. I used to think that great creative ideas just happened in a moment of inspiration. Roger MacDonnell, the chief executive officer and before that executive creative director of one of the first agencies I worked at, convinced me that great creativity comes from hard work and determination to continuously make the idea better.

GET EVERYONE TO OWN THE CCP

I know there's a school of thought that says ideas are best if kept pure and unsullied by others. But an idea becomes more powerful if it doesn't belong to just one person. The team has to own it. A good test of an idea is when everyone wants to claim it.

That requires the planner to be open to everyone's views of how to improve the idea by letting different parties add to it. The communications process needs to be a collaborative team effort.

REALLY SELL THE CCP

A great idea only ever happens if a client buys it. This is where creative agencies do a brilliant job. They don't toss out ideas to clients randomly. They put care and attention into crafting and presenting the case for an

idea. They produce impressive storyboards and mood tapes to help sell them. They treat it and present it as if it's the most important thing in the world. You're asking client representatives to stake their company's money on it and possibly their jobs, so make them feel they're betting on a sure thing.

It has to work across multiple platforms. Great ideas need to cross into multiple media, particularly digital, so don't let the origin of the idea limit its use.

TESTING THE CENTRAL COMMUNICATIONS PLATFORM

Once you develop several candidates for the CCP, you need to test them. We need to apply the filters shown in Figure 11.1 to judge whether it works.

The first filter is to determine whether the idea is *strategic*. Does the CCP address the communication objective? Will it enhance the desirable brand attributes, brand point of view, positioning? Does it capture or

FIGURE 11.1

Testing the Central Communications Platform

	Questions to Ask as You Develop the Central Communications Platform
Strategic	• Does it address the communication objective? • Will it enhance desirable brand attributes? • Is it in line with the brand's POV, positioning, and target audience?
Influential	• Can it cut through the clutter?
Simple	• Is it unique?
Ownable	• Can it help drive an emotional connection with the brand? • Does it address the consumer insight and motivational barriers?
Emotive	• How does it relate to these key points — Is it useful, is it entertaining, is it relevant?

Note: POV, point of view.

work off a target audience insight? Will consumers care? Dove's "Campaign for Real Beauty" lived up to the brand's global objective "to be the preferred beauty brand of women who want to make the most of their natural beauty."[1] They saw this campaign as an opportunity to champion real women. Dove asked, What's the best way to get on their side? And Dove argued *their* case.

Will the CCP be *influential* when it's executed? Most importantly, will it cut through the clutter of the category? Is it unexpected? Will it get attention? Surprises hold attention and interest. Is it counterintuitive? Is it something concrete that will help people understand and remember? The "Campaign for Real Beauty" worked well because it displaced the category convention of promoting *unattainable* beauty. The campaign celebrated the real beauty that comes in women of all sizes, shapes, and colors. Dove's agencies chose to celebrate natural beauty, letting each woman make the most of the real her. No more models!

A third filter is *simplicity*. Is the CCP focused, clear, and simple to execute? Does it help people understand and remember? Define the core message in one simple and profound sentence. For Dove's "Campaign for Real Beauty," it was "to help make more women beautiful every day."

Is the idea *ownable?* Can you tell a story around the idea? Dove occupies the lucrative everyday premium slot in the skin and hair care category. This gave them permission to talk about beauty across a range of products. They could stick up for the everyday woman. Was the campaign idea unique? Yes—it broke new ground, and as a result got women around the world talking.

Finally, can it *drive an emotional response?* Can it connect with and be relevant to its audience? Dove's campaign played off the insight of "I'm tired of fake images of beauty. I want to take good care of the body I've got, making the most of the real me."

While it's not crucial to meet all these filters, it is important that it meets a couple of these filters really well. As is common in the planning and creative fields, there isn't an established way of quantifying which CCP is the best one. But I've found getting the core agency team together and even the client, and going through the process of measuring the alternatives against these filters will help you choose.

Once the CCP has been run through these filters and is established, the second part of the activation process is to develop tactical programs with activation teams that expand and drive the CCP. This involves developing RFPs to brief vendors, digital agencies, social media partners, branded entertainment companies and experiential marketing companies, to develop programs and events.

One valuable means to develop these tactical programs is brainstorming.

FACILITATING IDEAS THROUGH BRAINSTORMING

If the strategy and insights are the fuel for ideas, then brainstorming is the combustion engine that sparks those ideas.

Brainstorming was popularized by an advertising guy, Alex Osborn, the "O" in BBDO.[2] Brainstorming is an important tool for generating ideas. Even more, it's a core task in an agency. I've always believed that the best part of advertising is coming up with ideas. I suspect that's what attracts a lot of young people to our profession. Brainstorming brings together two other important aspects of the agency business—collaboration and having fun. Hence, it's a process I like to encourage all planners and buyers to participate in.

Anyone can participate, whatever the department. Even the most inexperienced or junior employee can come up with ideas. In fact, they are more likely to be better at it than most chief executive officers and senior managers, who tend to be more problem solvers and whose jobs revolve around managing order.

Instead, first-year planners or buyers are more likely to be creative and in tune with technology, and they're also heavy consumers of media and in touch with popular culture. They are more often the very consumers we chase.

SOME TIPS ON BRAINSTORMING

A lot of agencies have developed their own versions of brainstorming, so if you have a favored approach, then stick to it. But here are some smart tips that I've picked up over the years that may help.

Getting the most out of a brainstorming session starts with a good facilitator. A facilitator's job is to chair the meeting rather than have the ideas. A facilitator motivates and encourages creative thinking and keeps things moving.

Encourage participation and fun. Hey, it beats doing Excel spreadsheets and pivot tables for an hour or so! Keep it upbeat. Evaluating or criticizing ideas is a no-no. There will be plenty of time later to filter the ideas. It's also important to put everyone on equal footing; no one in a brainstorming session is more senior than the other participants.

Put together a diverse team. The team should include people with different life and work experiences and craft skills. Ideally, have people who don't work on the client's business, and even better try to include at least one person who doesn't work in the agency. Keep the tone upbeat, enthusiastic, and creative. An optimum number for a brainstorming session is between four and six, tops. If you have more who want to participate, set up two or three separate groups.

To me, it's always important to ensure a productive brainstorm by providing a clear direction to what you want to achieve in terms of outputs. To do that, I like to establish what I refer to as the "Open Question." This is essentially the problem or opportunity you're looking to solve through media or communication tactics. It's the communications planner's job to take the lead in coming up with the Open Question. It should come from some of the insight work undertaken as part of the preplanning work. The structure of the Open Question is in two parts:

- How Can We (. . . excite; inspire; educate; use digital; be more competitive; differentiate; etc., etc.)
- So That . . . the target consumer (described in non-demographic terms) will take an action.

One of our teams did the following for Lexus Hybrid, when we were looking for ways to communicate how we promote its hybrid engine that switches between electrical and gas power. Our Open Question was: HOW CAN WE . . . show *posh people* that two is better than one, SO THAT we can talk about and explain Hybrid engines in an interesting way."

Focus on the quantity of ideas first. Quantity breeds quality. The more ideas, the greater the chance of moving off the obvious and current reference points to something new and that has never been done.

To create, the team needs a comfortable space. Try to avoid sitting around a boardroom table. Have colorful cushions, rooms with lots of light, food, and drink. Make sure to have a large bulletin board on a wall for attaching ideas and insights. This isn't a scientific process; it's an organic one. Write it all down. Ideas should be submitted as headlines. Keep the ideas visible; perhaps capture them on flip charts or sticky notes. Circulate the notes after the meeting, in case the participants have ideas the next day.

Someone once told me one of the most important words in a brainstorm is "because." To improve the quality of ideas, it's a very useful to add this as a qualifier to help avoid the randomness of ideas getting thrown into the pile. By encouraging people to say, "this is a good idea *because* . . ." or "we should do this *because* . . ." using *because* will advance the quality of the output.

Encourage idea building. Stretch what is discussed as far as possible to improve and sharpen the concepts. That's why I like to use the word "and." Use comments like "That's a great idea, *and* how could we build on it further?"

Lastly, the final important step is how to short-list the ideas. Ask people to present their ideas in punchy elevator pitch headlines, ideally with a visual. Then invite the participants to vote by putting stickers on the two or three best ideas they like.

THE INTEGRATED ACTIVATION BRIEF

The Integrated activation brief (figure 11.2) provides the key inputs for media planning, digital planning, and all other channel solutions including briefing media vendors. The brief should provide core product and brand information and relevant consumer insights. The briefing explains what the communications plan needs to achieve. It also sets out the business and communication goals of the plan and the Consumer Pathway stages that the communications are to target.

The briefing details the CCP and any viewpoint established on receptivity. It includes the potential role of each touch point in driving the

FIGURE 11.2

The Integrated Activation Brief

- Product and brand background
- Who are the customers?
- The campaign's goals
  - Business & communication goals
  - What are we trying to achieve?
  - What stages of the Consumer Pathway are we trying to influence?
- The campaign strategy
  - A central consumer, brand or business insight
  - The central communications platform or strategic platform
  - The creative idea (if available)
  - Areas of receptivity
- Specific role of the channel identified
- Metrics
  - How will you measure success?
- Provide some initial tactics as guidelines
- Budget options
- Timing

communications: for instance, "We need television to get people to visit the website to find out more information."

The briefing defines the metrics for judging the plan and any initial tactics that the planning team has brainstormed. These are used as a guideline for further ideation or development. It also suggests the initial budget, which is subject to further refinement. And lastly, the briefing includes the timing of each element of the campaign.

THE INITIAL BRIEFING EXCHANGE

Activation ideas begin with an initial briefing exchange. This is a meeting between the planning and activation teams, who use the time to dissect, tear apart, and recreate the brief, if necessary. We use it to torture test the CCP. Does the team think it can play out across different media channels? The team checks whether the budget parameters make sense.

At this stage it's ideal to get a provisional sign-off on the strategy and touch-point recommendations from the client before doing specific briefing for activations and tactics. Develop a synergistic RFP that can be applied across different media partners and vendors, then list the initial partners to decide what platforms will be used.

Explain the requirements of the activation plan to the vendors; set expectations and a timetable for a response. Ask for initial ideas and package the proposal. Review the ideas and share the review with the entire team. Identify the best: the ideas that can work on a variety of media platforms. Judge the ideas against the strategy, the potential impact, and coverage needs. Focus time, energy, and budget on the handful of ideas that really break through. Finally, present the recommendations to the client and get sign-off so you can move on to developing the idea platform in more depth.

CHALLENGES IN ACTIVATING A CENTRAL COMMUNICATIONS PLATFORM

Sometimes planners develop a CCP that the activation teams can't execute on. The Brand Media Strategy looks good on paper, it dovetails nicely with a powerful insight, and the client really loves and agrees with the approach. But activation teams are left scratching their heads because they can't translate the strategy into something real.

One case I recall that illustrates this was when my agency pitched the Payless ShoeSource account, the country's largest specialist shoe retailer. We developed an initial strategy that would leverage the retailer's goal of emotionally connecting with consumers through the democratization of fashion. A core insight we developed when we pitched this was that many women enjoy bragging about frugality. We saw an opportunity in getting new customers into the franchise by having customer fans be advocates.

One peripheral initiative Payless was implementing was www.ILove Shoes.com. Payless ShoeSource had acquired the URL, but hadn't marketed it extensively. The web address featured in some of their print and point-of-sale materials. We decided that we were on to something and wanted to make "I love shoes" much more front and center with their media communications. So we came up with the CCP "Share the love."

Chris Pyne, our strategic planning director, and I loved it. We gave it the overnight test and loved it even more. We then briefed the idea to the broadcast, print, and digital teams and asked them to come up with ideas to blow this idea out.

Conceptually, the idea worked nicely, and maybe because as chief executive I had given my seal of approval, the teams tried to be enthusiastic about it. They came back with some initial ideas, but they struggled to light it up. After about a week of seeing what came back, we killed it and found an alternative idea that worked much better in execution. It was a lesson that illustrated the importance of making sure that strategy can be executed. The happy ending was that we did win the pitch.

DEVELOPING MEDIA AND MESSAGE

Some of the best ideas come from media vendors. Because they are content creators, they know how to create what their audiences want to see and what's sticky. As we discussed in chapter 2, media companies want to use their resources as ways to attract advertising revenues and market share by leveraging content. There are plenty of examples. AOL chief executive Tim Armstrong has positioned AOL as a content company first; investing resources in developing custom content for advertisers is a big part of their offering to marketers.

Condé Nast set up its own creative services division to handle custom-specific marketing programs. NBC Universal has gone beyond its traditional role of broadcaster to marketing partner by establishing a creative department that helps produce brand marketing creative assets.

INTERRUPTION VERSUS DISRUPTION

To some extent I agree that communication needs to be more relevant, sympathetic, and entertaining to the consumer. But let's not forget that advertising is still advertising. The fact is that commercial breaks interrupt your television programs, and your morning radio and compete for space on your Yahoo! home page. It has become very popular to advocate that advertising needs to move past the interruption model into one of permission.

In my view, there's nothing wrong with disrupting the attention of the consumer. Standing out is a prerequisite of executing a communications plan. The difference between a campaign that is ignored and one that gets noticed is an ad that is executed in a compelling and creative way. Ideally, that ad must involve and engage, and that's why the execution is so important. The role of the activation team is to push the envelope further.

Executing campaigns and promoting brands is a skill that's always in a state of flux. Ten years ago, the notion of television presenters having any connection to advertised brands would have been frowned upon, and even scorned. Now we watch MSNBC *Morning Joe* hosts drink Starbucks coffee, and talk show hosts Jimmy Kimmel or Ellen DeGeneres perform live commercials. The Mark Burnett reality show *Survivor,* aired on CBS, broke ground in the world of brand integration when it wove in everything from Pontiacs to Doritos and Bud Light as prizes for those marooned on a desert island with little to eat.

Great execution strategies have a few things in common: they blur the line between content and advertising. They use technology. They're interactive, and they create experiences and participation.

BLURRING THE LINE BETWEEN CONTENT AND ADVERTISING

One effective tactic in media is blending the advertising and content through program partnerships.

CASE STUDY: HP AND MTV NETWORKS

In the world of computers, there's Apple, and there's everybody else. PCs were for office workers in suits and ties, while Apple Macs were for creative types. HP was very much the Johnny-come-lately to the style party.

In terms of technology, a Mac can't do anything more than a PC. What largely sets it apart is branding and design.

If HP wanted to ensure future business, it needed to target today the business leaders and style icons of tomorrow. The challenge their agency team faced was to make the PC cool again.

So how could HP make people perceive it as a cool, creative brand? Telling young people that HP had changed, that it had suddenly become stylish and desirable, wouldn't convince them. HP had to show them. The agency had to create a platform, an alternative reality if you will, that would show cool, creative and early adopters (the demographic many young people look to as trendsetters) that using HP's equipment could produce great creative work.

They partnered with MTV to show Millennials that the brand was relevant and accessible. The result was a multimedia reality show called *Engine Room,* in which sixteen of the most talented students from around the world competed in series of creative challenges, all using HP equipment.

First, they needed candidates. The global campaign kicked off with an intensive television ad burst in North America, Latin America, Europe, and Asia. The campaign asked people to submit their portfolios. A viral seeding strategy got under way with partners posting details of the campaign on relevant blogs and forums. Universities and design schools were targeted with posters to attract budding digital artists. Over two thousand applicants, from over 110 countries, competed for the 16 coveted places in the competition.[3] These seven creative challenges, ranging from animation, filmmaking, and sound mixing to web and graphic design, would showcase the power and style of HP's new product range.

The young artists now had a worldwide stage, and they received mentorship and critiques from a wide range of industry leaders, including iconic musicians, Hollywood directors, pioneering graphic designers, and the Guggenheim Museum's chief curator.[4] The final challenge asked MTV viewers to enter the *Engine Room* notebook design contest to create their own HP special-edition notebook. The competition invited artists from around the world to submit their best designs for a chance to have their art appear on the next special-edition HP notebook.

The campaign changed young people's attitudes toward HP. In a proprietary global study, research showed that after viewers watched MTV's *Engine Room,* the message of creativity was so strong that more young people associated HP with the sentiment "can do creative things on their PCs" than they did with Apple. (HP got 58 percent of the vote versus 51 percent for rival Apple.)[5]

The *Engine Room* site was bombarded. Almost eight hundred thousand unique visitors came to the site. The content-seeding strategy on blogs was so relevant that the links achieved a whopping 12 percent click-through rate, the number of links clicked divided by the number of link impressions.[6]

TECHNOLOGY: TURNING ADVERTISING INTO A UTILITY

Innovative use of technology can often be the difference between what stands out and what fades into the background.

Moxie Interactive and 20th Century Fox Studios personalized promotions for their holiday movie *Marley & Me* by creating a website that invited consumers to have the main character in the movie, the dog Marley,

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CASE STUDY: CREATING IRRESISTIBLE EXPERIENCES

Unilever has been able to transform itself from a predominantly television brand marketer to one that consistently shows imagination and deftness in becoming an experience-led brand marketer across their brand portfolio. Nowhere is that more evident than with grooming brand Axe (or Lynx, as it is known in the UK, Ireland, and Australia).

Launching its new body spray fragrance "Dark Temptation," they worked off insight work they had undertaken with women across 13 different countries. They unearthed a universal international truth that women find chocolate irresistible. They developed a CCP of "irresistible as chocolate." This platform became the central idea to execute experiences across its markets. The creative agency developed this into a core idea of a chocolate man featured in the advertising.

Mindshare developed an international campaign, creating experiences around the brief of "irresistible as chocolate." For example, in France two hundred thousand guys received "chocolate nibbles & licks" from girls on social networking site Skyrock.com. In the UK, they challenged British guys to test their pick-up skills by asking out women armed with just a bar of chocolate. In Brazil, they created an interactive online video game, "The Dark Temptation," which involved a chocolate man being chased by women. And in India, the brand created a chocolate fashion show attended by the fashion press and celebrities.

Nick Waters, leader of Mindshare EMEA, said, "Axe Dark Temptation is a wonderful example of taking a strong central idea and adapting it to resonate locally across the region."[7]

Axe's Dark Temptation was the fourth-most-successful launch in the company's 25-year history, surpassing all major global and European sales goals.[8]

fetch holiday gift ideas from various websites. At the center of the site is a search box that has Marley delivering on gift suggestions, while another allows visitors to buy tickets.

Another great example of using online to develop consumer experiences was that of 20th Century Fox using digital to drive experiences around *The Simpsons Movie* to activate interest and attendance.

CASE STUDY: *THE SIMPSONS MOVIE*— BLURRING MEDIA AND REALITY

There is no more hotly contested market than the box office. New big-budget movies from Hollywood's largest production companies slug it out every week to see which movies will have a big opening weekend and which will be also-rans. Being number one for an opening weekend can be the difference between making one hundred million dollars and losing one hundred million dollars. Few movies survive long after a weak opening. *The Simpsons Movie* had one advantage: a big preexisting base of loyal fans. Yet the franchise was almost 20 years old, and it had no guarantee that its popular 30-minute format would entice fans to pay eight dollars to watch a full-length movie.

Relying on advertising that focused on the popularity of the show or its characters to drive ticket sales would be a mistake, 20th Century Fox Studios realized. Had they done that, a simple television campaign on high-rated shows would have given them all the reach they needed to get the word out. Instead, they took advantage of the special opportunities created by emerging media. Their goal was to create a level of involvement with *The Simpsons* that went way beyond awareness of a new movie launch. By carefully manipulating the contextual opportunities presented by both digital and experiential media, Fox made the launch of *The Simpsons Movie* less like a typical movie launch and more like a cultural event.

For starters, Fox created fun television commercials and an engaging website. The site had lots of cool stuff, from the usual (for example, computer wallpapers and screen savers) to some silly yet surprisingly addictive games, complete with lots of "D'oh" and "Aye Carumba!" sound effects. It had a virtual tour of Springfield and a tool that let you create your own *Simpsons* avatar—just the sort of thing to get *Simpsons* fans engaged. But understanding context often means understanding that the people you want to reach will not necessarily go to your site. So Fox created a cross-promotion on Burger King's site where

people could submit a photo and "Simpsonize" themselves. This was a viral application that was fun to do and share whether you were a *Simpsons* fanatic or not. Where the campaign really shined, however, was in its use of the Web and the real world to turn context on its head.

Three ideas from the campaign are outstanding examples of reinventing the way people relate to media in its broadest sense. The first was an online contest that pitted 14 different American cities named Springfield against each other for the honor of being named *the* Springfield of *Simpsons* fame, giving the winner the right to hold the movie's premiere. The contest got the populations of these cities engaged and became a public relations extravaganza, with the contest and results covered by sponsor *USA Today* and news organizations around the country. When little Springfield, Vermont, beat the likes of sizable Springfield, Illinois, the residents of the winning town were described by *USA Today* as being in a *Simpsons* "frenzy."[9]

The second idea was an online campaign in partnership with JetBlue Airways. As one might expect, different Simpsons became spokespersons for different JetBlue destinations. But the campaign started to bend reality by having the show's corporate mogul, Montgomery Burns, take over the JetBlue chairman's blog. The hijacked blog led off as follows: "Hi I'm Montgomery Burns, Here's my newest attempt at robbing a man of his livelihood. I have temporarily taken over David Neeleman's blog as I believe I have more efficient ways to run this airline. I could crush him like an ant."

The third, and perhaps most spectacular, contextual idea was a joint promotion with 7-Eleven. Eleven 7-Eleven stores around America were physically transformed into Kwik-E-Marts (patterned after the show's convenience store helmed by Apu Nahasapeemapetilon), complete with loads of *Simpsons*-based products. All of the signage inside and out was changed. For people on the street or anyone stopping by for their morning cup of coffee, the world was just a little bit different. The line between fantasy and reality had been crossed. They not only knew there was a movie coming out but were deeply engaged in the *Simpsons* experience. People didn't have to be *Simpsons* fanatics to be caught up in the amusement and to feel that life would be a little more fun if they went to the movie.

Fox's creativity in challenging the usual uses of media, and even reality, led to tremendous results. The film earned seventy-four million dollars for its opening weekend. It was the third-highest nonsequel opening of all time. Had this animated movie, with its quirky sense of humor, looked at media in the traditional way, or even used digital media in a noncreative way, there is a good chance that only *Simpsons* fans would have shown up.

QUESTIONS TO ASK ABOUT EXECUTING
THE BRAND MEDIA STRATEGY

Review a current brand media campaign.

1. From the executions, can you guess what the Central Communications Platform is?
2. How does this strategy differentiate the product from competitors' products in the category?
3. Does the media plan amplify the creative campaign?
4. Does this campaign stand out, disrupt?

MEASUREMENT AND METRICS

MAKING THE BRAND MEDIA STRATEGY ACCOUNTABLE

EMBRACING MEASUREMENT

I face a tough challenge with this chapter: how to make measurement and metrics interesting enough for a planner to want to read it!

Return-on-investment (ROI) numbers for many communications planners is a bit like going to the dentist: something you need to check in with regularly, but not something you look forward to. But measuring effectiveness for the Brand Media Strategy is more than just a box-ticking exercise or a cosmetic procedure like teeth whitening. It's the very core of communications planning.

One of the most fundamental points of communications planning is *not* whether the campaign sold more product or grew market share. It's about understanding where and how the elements of the communications plan actually drove the final outcome. Of course, we know that many factors out of the planner's control significantly affect sales—pricing, the product, distribution, and competitive factors, not to mention the creative work. But in this era of Google advertising precision and accountability,

it's not enough to say, "Media's done its job, we achieved the ratings or delivered the advertising to the right audience."

"In a world that is drowning in data, knowing what to ignore is as important as knowing what to consider. . . . over-reliance on metrics is stifling marketing. Justifying marketing's value only through metrics results in an over-emphasis on metrics . . . the numbing by numbers. . . . do not use metrics to justify; use metrics to guide continuous improvement."

—Larry Light, former global chief marketing officer,
McDonald's, now chief brands officer for
InterContinental Hotel Group[1]

In this new media world of marketing science and communications accountability there has to be a willingness for higher responsibility to know what worked. We need to be able to answer the hard questions. There has to be a stronger work ethic behind learning how to improve and optimize plan performance. And I aim to show you how to achieve that with this chapter.

THE NUMBERS TELL THE STORY

I'm a huge fan of professional basketball. I love the athleticism and skill of a Kevin Durant dunk and the drama and anticipation that builds when the coach calls a time-out for the final play of the game with just seconds left on the clock. It's pure magic. But what really fascinates me is viewing TNT's *Half Time Show,* where the TV commentators pore over the stats to explain how the game has unfolded and what each team needs to do to win the game.

Former All Star player and television analyst Charles Barkley will comment, "The Celtics have forced six turnovers in the first half; Miami needs to look after the basketball if they are to get back into this game." Former Rockets player Kenny Smith will observe, "The difference between Houston and Dallas tonight is the outside shooting. Houston is shooting 64 percent versus Dallas 23 percent. The Mavs are going to have to defend the Rockets more aggressively and look for easier shots inside the paint."

Similarly, it's the marketing statistics that tell the nonstop, ever evolving action in advertising. More importantly, they give very good direction as to how to win the Brand Media Strategy game. Just like sports coaches, a communications planner needs a strategy to win, and that involves making the adjustments needed to improve the outcome.

ADVERTISING CAUSE AND EFFECT JUST GOT HARDER

Proving advertising cause and effect has become a much more challenging issue in today's digital media world. On the one hand, everything is more measurable, but on the other hand, according to Frank Harrison, ZenithOptimedia's worldwide director of strategic resources, "In just a few years, the volume of influences on consumer purchase decisions has grown hugely, both those within and outside of the brand managers' control."[2]

Media's long tail is making it more difficult to be as effective, fragmentation is splitting the audience, and consumers are subject to a much more complex decision-making process. All have an effect on the business and marketing environment. It is harder today to understand what works and what doesn't. "In US companies, both large and small, the goal of achieving true, demonstrable accountability for the marketing function, if it is considered at all, is one that has proven elusive for years." In a survey of chief marketing officers[3], two-thirds of senior marketers feel the pressure from their Board and chief executive officer to prove the value of marketing. And similarly, 67 percent say that they are formally evaluate the quality of their marketing analytics.[4]

METRICS MUST BE DRIVEN BY
OBJECTIVES AND TARGETS

Research is big business in the United States, where around $8.6 billion is spent trying to figure out consumption and media habits.[5]

The problem in media isn't that we don't have enough data; it's that there is too much. The communications industry, particularly the part that deals with measuring media, is overloaded with metrics. There are

tracking studies, competitive reporting, consumer segmentation, product usage and attitudinal studies, media currencies, online surveys, copy testing, and econometric modeling, in addition to literally billions of data points now being collected in digital media.

There are numerous audience surveys for each medium. Television alone is tracked by Nielsen, TiVo, Rentrak, and Kantar Media, among many others. Pay-television companies are researching set-top boxes that could offer precision targeting from individual household data. And the 2009/10 recession accentuated the desire to add to this data pile. It's easy to lose track or be overwhelmed.

In some cases research is used simply to justify the job. Many times its proof of measurability is used as a surrogate for accountability. Of course there is a need to measure success, but research should be about influencing decision-making. The trick is reading and tracking only the data that helps make better decisions.

The role of research is twofold: steer and track the strategy, and develop and optimize the tactics.

STEER AND TRACK THE BRAND MEDIA STRATEGY

Before surrounding yourself with data and research, start with a definition of what success looks like. Chapter 4, "Focusing on Outcomes, Not Outputs," deals with this in great detail. Marketers want to see how the Brand Media Strategy is driving clear outcomes and communications effectiveness.

As pointed out in chapter 4, communication goals need to be established at the outset. They need to align with appropriate stages of the Consumer Pathway and demonstrate a clear line of sight to how the communications will influence the business outcome. The key performance indicators (KPIs) should quantify the communication goals and help determine what and how effective the Brand Media Strategy is.

Focus on a few metrics, ideally just the most significant one. KPIs should measure the collective impact of media and message. Measurement should not try to determine media's success separately from creative's. Both need to work to drive the overall communications. Nor is it about

measuring the individual effectiveness of each medium. The communications planner drives the holistic impact of the entire plan.

T-Mobile's marketing goals centered on driving acquisition. Their brand awareness levels weren't high, but we assessed that brand consideration was the core issue. Only one in five switchers would consider the brand. We measured individual components of the client's media program, but the overriding focus was on shifting consideration. We made significant adjustments in the media mix and the messaging. Budget was shifted into newspapers and magazines, while the client honed their digital program toward consideration-based offers. Traditional measures of coverage and efficiency actually fell slightly, but consideration increased by nearly 50 percent, and acquisitions improved.

The Consumer Pathway provides the foundation for setting the communication goals and establishing the KPIs, used to evaluate a communications campaign. The KPIs for each stage of the Consumer Pathway warrant different strategies and tactics and different measurement. Some example KPIs are shown in Figure 12.1.

Marketing research departments tend to measure all the different stages of the Consumer Pathway, but focusing on one or two KPIs will deliver a more focused communications effort and increase the likelihood of success. The best campaigns, I've noticed, come with a clear and single-minded goal and metric.

THE CAMPAIGN MEASUREMENT PROCESS

DETERMINE OBJECTIVES AND SUCCESS CRITERIA

The purpose here is to define the quantifiable goal along the Consumer Pathway, either one or a combination of the following: awareness, involvement, active consideration and intent, trial, purchase, loyalty, and advocacy. Specify explicit success targets for the goals (for example, increase product awareness X percent from the current level).

For the Denny's Super Bowl Grand Slam Giveaway, our communication goal was to get people to come back to Denny's one more time. The KPI was guest-count traffic.

FIGURE 12.1

Establishing Metrics to Steer and Improve the Brand Media Strategy

Consumer Pathway	Communications Challenge	Key Performance Indicators
Awareness	Launch a product Communicate a benefit Tell of an event or offer	Key message playback Ad awareness Brand awareness
Involvement	Increase emotional engagement before purchase	Brand attribute levels Brand affinity Time spent with brand
Active consideration	Shift up the order of consideration by facilitating favorable comparison	Purchase consideration Store traffic Top 3 Quote requests
Purchase	Convert intent into action at the point of purchase	Trial Penetration Purchase volume/value
Consumption	Improve the user experience	Customer satisfaction Usage occasions Purchase requests
Relationship building	Make customer feel special to improve per capita value by length of use, purchase frequency or price paid	Repeat purchase rate Resistance to price rises Purchase requests
Advocacy	Increase recommendations	Buzz & blog levels Net promoter scores Review quality/accuracy

IDENTIFY LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND ANALYSIS APPROACH

Measurement is an ongoing process of building knowledge and experience to aid future planning.

Three months before the Denny's Super Bowl promotion, we had tested different media tactics with the client. We tested two key variables: First, we targeted what we called the "breakfast super fan," as opposed to the more general target. Second, the client bought television ad time in college football play-off games leading into the holiday season. We saw positive increases in guest counts when this activity was coordinated with an offer.

IDENTIFY METRICS AND DATA SOURCES

Marrying the metrics to the goals and tactics involves identifying metrics and data sources. I suggest breaking metrics into two groups: tracking, to gauge response, and diagnostics, to determine improvement opportunities. Then identify data sources and reporting requirements to implement measurement tracking.

We had several business metrics for Denny's, such as guest counts on the promotion day and for the six weeks after the Grand Slam Breakfast giveaway promotion. The client set the expectation of a positive marketing ROI for these periods. Secondary communication goals included visits to the website and, in particular, using the restaurant locator function on the website. We tracked the audience reach of the Super Bowl spot and the cost effectiveness of the buy relative to other advertisers, and we tracked the favorability of the commercial itself to the audience.

DEFINE MEASUREMENT AND REPORTING PLAN

Eventually, there is a requirement to build a consolidated measurement plan outlining objectives, metrics, methodology, data infrastructure, test design and recommended reporting, and the analysis schedule. If applicable, this could also include measurement tool assessment.

In addition to the business metrics, we included all media data sources that tracked the Denny's promotion: television audience ratings and reach, buzz via Search, Twitter, and blogs, and established targets for paid search.

COMMUNICATE MEASUREMENT PLAN

Communicate guidelines of data reporting requirements to all necessary stakeholders.

For Denny's media reach, estimates were established up front so as to get approval of the plan. Measurement reporting such as overnight ratings and online metrics were sent to senior executives the day after the Super Bowl spot ran.

COLLECT DATA, INTERPRET AND ANALYZE RESULTS

Be descriptive: what is happening? Be diagnostic: why is it happening? Ask: how can we improve performance?

When the Denny's campaign launched, we saw a huge number of news stories about the campaign. We measured the reach and value of the PR in addition to the media campaign itself. When the campaign ended, the team analyzed the results and saw an opportunity to extend it beyond the six-week run of the promotion by building a database for future campaigns to extend and remarket to customers.

MARKETING AND PROCESS OPTIMIZATION

Create and reestablish baseline and benchmark metrics. Refine the marketing strategy and redefine learning priorities. After year one, we had the data and experience of the previous year's campaign and were then able to set more specific target and ROI goals for year two.

Figure 12.2 illustrates the process.

USING ONLINE DATA TO TRACK CAMPAIGN PERFORMANCE

Probably one of the most efficient ways to collect campaign data is through online measurement. I've found that digital data is useful for more than measuring digital campaigns or evaluating direct response efforts. While not a replacement for brand or sales tracking, online metrics can indicate how the entire media communications effort is performing.

If the communications goal is to drive active consideration, then measuring who is visiting the branded website and what they do once they get there yields valuable insight. For example, are they requesting more information or downloading content? If the goal is to raise awareness for a product or service, as is the case in much pharmaceutical consumer-based advertising, it can be measured by how often the drug or generic medical condition is searched for. If the goal is to drive advocacy, measuring blogs, tweets, conversations, postings, and product reviews is a useful method to gauge impact.

FIGURE 12.2

Steer and Track the Strategy
Campaign Measurement Process

1. Determine objectives and success criteria	• Define quantifiable objectives along the Consumer Pathway; from awareness and familiarity to consideration and intent, to trial and purchase, to loyalty and advocacy • Specify explicit success targets for each objective (e.g., increase product awareness X% from current level)
2. Identify learning objectives and analysis approach	• Identify/prioritize learning objectives (e.g., target, offer, message) and tactics • Illustrate test design if possible and define assumptions • Outline analysis structure to attain goal learning
3. Identify metrics and data sources	• Map metrics for success to objectives and tactics • Break out metrics into tracking (to gauge response) and diagnostic (determine improvement opportunities) • Identify data sources and reporting requirements
4. Define measurement and reporting plan	• Define contact guidelines to implement measurement tracking • Architect consolidated measurement plan outlining objectives, metrics, methodology, data infrastructure, test design, and recommended reporting and analysis schedule • If applicable, also include measurement tool assessment
5. Communicate measurement plan	• Communicate guidelines of contact development and data reporting requirements to all necessary stakeholders
6. Collect data, interpret and analyze results	• Descriptive – What is happening? • Diagnostic – Why is it happening? How can we improve performance?
7. Marketing and process optimization	• Create/reestablish baseline & benchmark metrics • Refine marketing strategy and redefine learning priorities

While these by no means offer boardroom-proof evidence of marketing ROI, they can provide planners real-time and dynamic indicators of consumer response to a campaign.

DIGITAL MEASUREMENT TOOLS

Google Analytics and the brand websites can provide sound data on search inquiries and traffic and behavior. Many online tools measure and quantify the level of blogs, posts, social media conversations, and Tweets. Most of them are free. Here is a selection of some that I've found useful.

Google Insights: With Google Insights for search, you can compare search volume patterns across specific regions, categories, time frames, and properties. It provides the most commonly searched keywords around a term as well as keywords rising in search popularity.

HowSociable: HowSociable measures brand visibility across the social web. It tracks a brand across 32 social media metrics and provides a visibility that can be used to compare one brand to another.

Social Mention: Social Mention is a social media search platform that aggregates user-generated content from across the Internet into a single stream of information. It allows you to easily track what people are saying about you, your company, a new product, or any topic across the Web's social media landscape in real time.

Klout: Klout evaluates a brand or a person's Twitter, Facebook, Google+, LinkedIn, Foursquare, Wikipedia, and Instagram data to create a Klout score out of 100, to measure the breadth and strength of one's online social influence.

Twitalyzer: Twitalyzer is a cool site that evaluates the activity of any brand in Twitter and reports on relative strength, signal-to-noise ratio, favor, passion, Klout score, and other useful measures of success in social media.

Wordle: Wordle is a program for generating "word clouds" from text that you provide. The clouds give greater prominence to words that appear more frequently in the source text. You can tweak your clouds with different fonts, layouts, and color schemes.

AWARENESS, WHAT SORT OF AWARENESS?

Speaking at the Measure Up conference, Kevin Clancy, chief executive officer of Copernicus Marketing Consultancy, said there are 25 different awareness metrics that range from unaided advertising to specific message registration.[6] The skill is determining which awareness level to focus on, which are related to the category or the communication goal.

One test is to ask the consumer to name the first brand that comes to mind when mentioning a particular category (top-of-mind awareness). It is generally a good barometer for brand preference and market share. Another test is that of unaided advertising awareness. Clancy claims that general awareness is about twice the brand's share of voice, and it is partially related to the volume of advertising, but has more to do with how established the brand is. Then there is also specific advertising message awareness, which involves asking, "Have you seen or heard any advertising for XXX in the past 30 days that uses the slogan 'YYY'?" This measurement is highly sensitive to changes in advertising.

MARKET-MIX MODELING

Essentially, market-mix, or econometric, modeling isolates individual marketing or media variables to determine their effect on sales. Companies such as Procter & Gamble, Johnson & Johnson, and Reckitt Benckiser are strong advocates of this work, and many advertisers in financial services, telecoms, and retail regularly undertake analytics. It's used to help direct media mixes and measure ROI. For example, with television it can help brands identify the best times of day, channels, days of the week, spot lengths, and effectiveness of different creative.

From a planning perspective, market-mix modeling is the gold standard as it evaluates the effectiveness and efficiency of media options based on a true ROI. However, it is costly to implement, and so for many clients is not an option.

ALL THE SCIENCE CANNOT REPLACE HUMANS

Econometric modeling only improves what you have done in the past. It relies on data collected over numerous past campaigns. So if you've only ever advertised on television, it won't provide data on other media. For companies like Reckitt Benckiser, which know that television is the principal driver of repeat sales, that's not an issue. However, if there is a need for change in a brand or marketing strategy, or a new product or category is being launched, then it is less helpful.

Econometric modeling can measure only short-term impacts on sales. This form of tracking works efficiently for fast-moving consumer goods or retailers. It's more difficult to use for big-ticket items or highly involved purchases such as automobiles, for business products, or in major brand efforts to change perceptions.

As marketers require more certainty and measurability in their strategies, modeling techniques are improving.

DEVELOP AND OPTIMIZE THE TACTICS

Planners have numerous metrics to deploy to develop and fine-tune the media plan. And just as in the basketball analogy, tracking individual player statistics can help them improve their game.

These metrics are important for improving the quality of selection and optimizing the efficiency of the media budget. They provide comparisons for planning trade-offs and making buying decisions.

MEDIA PLANNING CURRENCIES

Media planning currencies include impressions, gross rating points, reach and frequency, page views, and unique views, to name a few. They are used to report the size of the audience exposed via media panels.

Each medium is measured differently. Print readership is measured through independently verified surveys; television and radio audiences are determined by people meters or diaries; out-of-home audiences are tracked through traffic surveys. Complicating it all are the different definitions of what constitutes an impression in each media category.

Media currencies are used to quantify and support the media planning of campaigns and negotiate trading terms with media based on the size of the audience. They track individual media vehicles to help make decisions on station, title or site selection, and various positions to secure.

REACH AND FREQUENCY

Reach quantifies the coverage of the target audience that a medium delivers. Usually, it only measures a single medium's reach, but agencies have developed models to estimate the combined coverage of multiple media types.

Frequency determines the intensity of the advertising. The higher the frequency, the more persuasive and more visible the campaign is.

SHARE OF VOICE

In marketing there is a common assumption that high share of voice is an important measure of media competitiveness. According to Ipsos ASI, which tracks marketing performance via its Brand*Graph database, share of voice has a positive correlation with advertising recall and impact.[7] However, this correlation is less influential in driving recall than other

factors such as creative quality, high reach, scheduling of advertising, and avoiding wear-out of creative.

The impact of advertising creative is often more important than share of voice, so the communications planner needs to consider this in the planning process. Investing in strong copy is an important consideration. The planner needs to ask how strong the creative is and, in particular, how it meets the brand objectives.

Reach, frequency, and share of voice are measures that quantify the scale of media presence but lack an evaluative assessment of receptivity or attention to the communications. They are estimates of potential exposures or impressions but not the "depth" of impressions. Planning in media is a bit like buying fish at a fish market. You weigh the fish but also check its quality, hence the growing development of engagement metrics.

ENGAGEMENT METRICS

Planners interested in increasing communications influence and involvement are studying engagement metrics. However, *engagement* isn't universally defined; there is no standard currency despite many attempts to measure it.

The Advertising Research Foundation employed a task force that found over 50 different research studies and methodologies that measured media engagement.[8] Studies measure time spent viewing particular media, brainwave activity in response to stimuli, and impact of media environments on advertising recall and purchase intent. Often these are sponsored by individual media owners, pushing the merits of their medium. Of course, the sponsors of such studies have an agenda, but I try to keep an open mind. If a media company has deeper insights into their particular consumer, then a study they sponsor is worth considering.

Nielsen IAG aims to quantify how closely viewers are paying attention to television shows and commercials. It surveys a panel of television viewers each night on how well they recall the details of programs, sponsorships, branded integrations, product placements, and ads they've seen in the past 24 hours. Nielsen IAG co-chief executive officer Alan Gould claims the service helps advertisers "make smarter decisions" about which

programs and ads are performing best. "We'll see advertisers buying TV spots increasingly on the basis of how engaged the audience is, not just how big it is," he says.[9]

IMPROVING METRICS

Little advancement in media can take place without commonly agreed-upon measurement standards. The business models of tomorrow are being decided in meetings today.

The world of television product placement and integration did not take off en masse until Nielsen acquired IAG and began to provide marketers with metrics to help evaluate what is seen and discussed on-screen. The global recession brought renewed vigor for addressable advertising advancements, which aim to deliver customized targeted television ads to individual households on the basis of profile data, for example, the proverbial cat food ads to cat owners.

Nielsen's development of its Online Campaign ratings will bridge the planning of video across television and digital, while location data for mobile platforms has opened up more relevant form of targeting of prospects.

What's clear is that measurement for the communications planner takes on greater proportions as technology facilitates gathering more and better access to data. The planner needs to keep in mind that measurement isn't about reporting and justification. It is about making better decisions and adjustments that steer the strategy and tactics.

QUESTIONS ON INCORPORATING
METRICS AND MEASUREMENT

1. Are the KPIs aligned to the communication goals?
2. What are the one or two most important metrics for this campaign?
3. Do we have established benchmarks to set meaningful goals?
4. How can the data help me steer or change the plan?

BIG DATA AND ANALYTICS

FROM MAD MEN TO
MATH MEN (AND WOMEN)

B ig data is quickly being catapulted to the top of marketing's agenda. Companies are collecting more data than ever before, whether it is customer data collected from retail outlets, consumer data from weather patterns to daily commuter traffic, or the literally millions of data points collected on a company's e-commerce site or search traffic. And it is changing the game for business.

Moreover, media and the agency planners are very much at the center of this movement. The communications planner may or may not be the one handling the data. But there is a bevy of econometricians, data scientists, and digital analysts now being employed by agencies and data management specialists who are informing brand media strategies and tactics for marketers.

The level of insight into consumers is unprecedented. According to Mindshare, the average consumer uploads 3,654 pieces of personal information onto a database every week.[1] The ability to collect that data, develop insight, and activate marketing programs as a result of the insight is taking on increasing proportions. This development is adding more precision, speed, and efficiency to marketing and media programs.

WHY THE SHIFT TO DATA IN MEDIA?

The digitization of media has added more opportunities to collect and utilize data even more than in the past.

Multiscreen metrics—With consumers using multiple devices at the same time, our ability to optimize "offline" channels based on correlated "online" activity means better instant measurement and possible budget shifting of traditional media.

Improved targeting—Technology enables us to target specific audiences with highly relevant messages based on their behavior. This includes what they've searched for, what websites they've visited, and their social graph data. But that data is moving beyond the Web to television. Access to the records inside home set-top boxes on cable and satellite television is providing increasing robust data at an individual home level.

Digitization of media inventory—As more media becomes digital, including television, the ability to optimize inventory will increase dramatically, enabling more rapid budget shifting to meet goals.

Common data platforms—Data sets are now more connected than ever. Companies are more actively combining all types of different data—sales, customer relationship management (CRM), media—to rapidly sharpen and improve their marketing activities.

DATA IS CHANGING MARKETING

Data is enabling more dynamic solutions across all four P's of marketing. Below are some examples of how brands are exploiting data to deliver more consumer-centric marketing.

Product—Coca-Cola has employed vending machines that allow consumers to create their own mixes of Coca-Cola products. The company is using this data for product development and marketing.

Pricing—Sports teams like the St. Louis Cardinals are using online data that includes the number of searches for tickets, weather forecasts, and player status to help them predict and adjust ticket prices in real time to maximize income.

Place—Retailer Tesco is adapting their retail footprint by using mobile to enable consumers to instantly purchase products via outdoor advertising, including in the subway.

Promotion—Nike is dynamically changing their creative advertising. During the 2012 Olympic Games, they employed over 21,000 ad units, which were developed and tailored to specific users on Facebook.

THE UNKNOWN TO KNOWN

As the data available increases, so too do our genuine knowledge and insight into audiences.

Advertising on mainstream media has traditionally relied on a limited profile of audience demographics taken from a sample of those measured. Filters of age and sex breakdowns were the most universal groupings of audiences, sometimes allowing for income or various lifestyle qualities. As media planners, we then looked to match those demographic groupings of audiences to a brand's consumer profile. This has evolved to enable us to better target consumers with media. This includes the collecting of product and brand usage patterns sourced through questionnaires such as MRI to cross-index with media usage, or the matching of this data with the traditional media currencies. However, while this approach improved the precision of the media planning, it still relied on sampling.

The next evolution came with data on the Web. We are now able to utilize behavioral data for media targeting. So finding people who are based in Boston and who have searched for vacations in Mexico has become an everyday activity for hotel chains and airlines to retarget those individuals by serving customized offers through display ads via intelligent advertising networks.

Now consumers are leaving an observable, trackable exhaust trail of behavior and attitudes, coupled with the technology to observe, collect, and curate these brand experiences bespoke to the individual. Companies like Amazon have for some time been able to match their email marketing and customer recommendations on their site back to their individual customer spending actions. The increased ability in matching customer

purchase data with other marketing and media data is not only allowing marketers to deliver custom marketing messages to known customers and prospects but also to close the loop on the effectiveness and return on investment (ROI) of those promotional efforts.

MARKETERS ARE INVESTING IN TECHNOLOGY

Marketing is increasingly becoming more technology based. Harnessing and mastering big data is now seen as crucial to driving a competitive advantage. To give you a sense of how marketers are embracing data, the market research company Gartner predicts that by 2017, chief marketing officers will spend more on technology than chief information officers.[2]

Digital marketing is very much an engine for this development. chief marketing officers and chief information officers alike must recognize that technology and marketing are now inextricably tied together, and that future success depends on the creation of a totally new kind of cross-functional organization.

The implication for planners is that this data is providing new sources of insight. Different perspectives on consumer behavior are able to unlock more responsive strategies using media. This is creating new mechanisms to value inventory, which in turn is providing opportunities for new media firms or providers of technology to exploit data. Finally, it is enabling measurement in real time.

FAST-MOVING DATA BEGINS TO SUPERSEDE SLOW-MOVING DATA IN MEDIA

In chapter 12, we discussed the volume of media research data that has for over half a century informed media decision-making. Audience ratings and readership have been the staple currency by which media has been planned and bought. In addition, the practice of media-mix modeling allowed marketers to isolate a number of external variables to determine which media and marketing channels were more efficient at driving ROI. Brand measures based on consumer perception and awareness studies have been applied as metrics for measuring and steering planning on brands.

All these data sources can be described as *slow-moving* data, which is important and robust, but often collected either on a monthly, quarterly, or even an annualized basis. But with the digitizing of all media, it is possible for data to be collected weekly, daily, or even on an hourly basis. The ability to analyze this *fast-moving data* is an exciting development for agency planners.

SOCIAL DATA PROVIDES DYNAMIC CONSUMER FEEDBACK

Social media data is often the rawest and most immediate feedback that brands are able to capture. During the 2012 nationally broadcast presidential debates, consumers on Twitter and Facebook were reacting to every word and comment made. When Governor Mitt Romney uttered the unfortunate "binders full of women" comment, it set off an avalanche of reaction on Twitter and Facebook, which was captured by the Obama campaign and prompted them to pay to post the line on Twitter.[3]

THE ABILITY TO BE MORE PERSONALIZED AND REAL TIME

Suppliers of digital advertising, either directly by the publishers or via third-party networks of online display inventory, offer incredible levels of data on users' behavior and preferences. Increasingly, technology solutions are able to match this data alongside brand data, including on-site visitors or customer interactions. This is providing better solutions to filter and serve advertising to more targeted prospects with relevant messaging. Retargeting a tactic often employed by online retailers involves tracking behavior on their e-commerce sites, and then following those individuals after they leave their site and targeting them with ads. A retail client I worked with at Mindshare was able to follow the individual items that users browsed or placed into their shopping carts, but didn't purchase. We were able to retarget individually, dynamically serving display ads that featured the individual products to those individual users. The personalization of this media campaign ensured much higher responses and product sales. Typically for this client, we were serving over one hundred thousand different individual ads each month.

TRADITIONAL MEDIA HAVE BECOME MORE DATA RICH TOO

As traditional media has digitized, so has the availability of data and the ability for media planners to capture and respond with increased granularity. Out of Home has taken to fast-moving data. Outcast Media, a digital media company that sells video advertising atop fuel pumps across gas stations throughout the United States, is now working with advertisers to run video ads based on a profile of the user's credit card that is being used to pay for his/her fuel. The possibilities appear endless as media companies and the agencies look to exploit the richness of targeting based on data.

TARGETING TECHNOLOGY

As media itself become more data rich, this has become a form of commerce, with companies looking to monetize the ability to target better. Companies like Google, Visible World, and Invidi are bringing Internet-targeting capability and adaptability to television and other offline media. With people increasingly consuming media across multiple screens at the same time, there has been a lot of attention on measuring cross-channel media consumption. In 2013, Twitter acquired media research company Blue Fin Labs to enable Twitter to market and measure Twitter usage alongside live television viewership as a *second screen* advertising opportunity.[4] Music streaming services such as Pandora, Spotify, and Apple's iRadio provide personalized targeting technology based on listening trends and profiles.

USING DATA TO PREDICT CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

Not only are we able to target more succinctly, but big data is opening up the opportunity to learn more about consumers with each interaction and potentially predict consumer behavior and market accordingly.

The Weather Company, which owns the Weather Channel TV Network, website, and mobile extensions is working with marketers to apply their data on weather patterns to help predict consumer shopping. Vikram Somaya, general manager of their advertising arm, told *The Atlantic*

magazine they are advising retailers on what products to stock, based on local weather conditions.[5] For example, they discovered that in Chicago, beer sales increase when summer temperatures are below normal three days in a row; whereas, in Dallas, people buy sunscreen and bug spray in the spring when the dew point goes down.[6]

DIGITAL MEDIA IS USHERING IN AN ERA OF MICROTARGETING

Microtargeting is a modification of direct marketing, which encompasses the ability to segment and message targets into narrow groups. The phrase was popularized by political campaigns. In 2004, the term started to be employed in the media by Karl Rove, along with Blaise Hazelwood at the Republican National Committee, in George W. Bush's reelection campaign. According to technology writer Chad Vander Veen, "prior to that time, microtargeting was irrelevant because of the limited number of available media outlets."[7] Traditional media was too broad to microtarget audiences. The Bush campaign used data to microtarget voters in 18 states. In Florida, the campaign used microtargeting to make contact with 84 percent of eventual Bush voters. In Iowa, the campaign reached 92 percent of Bush's eventual voters.

According to Bush strategist Matthew Dowd, "We could get at Bush voters in Democratic precincts, swing precincts and other places we'd never been able to look before."[8]

CASE STUDY: HOW DATA AND MICROTARGETING WON THE 2012 ELECTION FOR OBAMA[9]

Nowhere are the stakes so high and the media budgets as significant as are seen in the US presidential elections.

If Barack Obama's presidential campaign in 2008 was defined by social media, then surely his successful 2012 reelection bid should be attributed to the campaign's use of data and microtargeting.

Election night seemed to confound many of the pundits. Governor Romney appeared to put together a strong campaign, leading in the polls in the final

week, suggesting a tight race. Romney won 60 percent of White voters. He in fact even won the Independent vote. Yet he lost the key battleground states of Ohio, Florida, Virginia, New Hampshire, Iowa, Colorado, and Nevada . . . handing the sitting president a second term.

HOW DID OBAMA WIN?

First, he delivered a well-orchestrated campaign of largely negative advertising targeting Romney, which served the purpose of suppressing voter turnout by traditionally Republican supporters.

Second, he mobilized key voter blocks to register early and vote: 18–24-year-olds, African Americans, Latinos, and single women in the key swing states. Voter turnout for these four key demographics was about 70 percent, giving him the numbers he needed to push him over the edge.

At the heart of these two strategies was microtargeting.

Microtargeting is the ability to dissect, in this case the voter population, into narrow segments and customize messaging to them, both in on-the-ground activities and in the media.

Microtargeting isn't a new idea in politics or even in marketing, for that matter. Rove expertly exploited this approach in the successful Bush campaign in 2000 and 2004. But it was the sophistication and the scale of how they executed this strategy that in the end proved the knock-out punch for the Democrats in 2012.

The Obama camp, in preparing for this election, established a huge analytics group comprised of behavioral scientists, data technologists, and mathematicians. They worked tirelessly to gather and interpret data to inform every part of the campaign. Not only did they build a voter file that included voter history and demographic profiles but they also collected numerous other data points around interests . . . for example, did the voter give to charitable organizations or which magazines did he/she read, to help them better understand who the voters were and better identify the group of "persuadables" to target.

That data was able to be drilled down to zip codes, individual households, and in many cases individuals within those households.

However, it is how they deployed this data in activating their campaign that translated the insight they garnered into killer tactics for the Obama campaign.

Volunteers canvassing door to door or calling constituents were able to access these profiles via an app accessed on an iPad, iPhone, or Android mobile device to provide an instant transcript to help them steer their conversations.

They were also able to input new data from their conversation back into the database in real time.

The profiles informed the campaign's direct and email fundraising efforts. They used issues such Obama's support for gay marriage or Romney's missteps in his portrayal of women to directly target more liberal and professional women in their database with messages that "Obama is for women," using that opportunity to solicit contributions to his campaign.

Microtargeting helped them steer their broadcast-buying approach. While both campaigns followed conventional wisdom to buy spots in local broadcast news programming, Obama's team differentiated its schedule by adding networks like TV Land, whose viewers they determined "were less political" and therefore more likely to be persuadable.

Even the selection of celebrity fundraisers was informed by the data. The team identified women ages 40–49 as the highest contributors to their campaign. Obama's analytics team, in crunching the numbers, uncovered that Sarah Jessica Parker of *Sex in the City* fame popped as the most appealing celebrity to this demographic, and they called her up to ask if she would host a fundraiser dinner for Obama in New York. Web ads and emails from Michelle Obama were sent, targeting this group and asking them to "chip in whatever they can," with a chance to win an invitation, a hotel, and a flight to New York to attend the event.

As mentioned earlier, encouraging early voting and a higher turnout of key target groups was critical in winning the swing states. The Obama campaign used classic microtargeting online advertising to reach those groups. The Obama team's use of Facebook this time was also very clever, tapping into Facebook's individual profile data. A million users downloaded the Obama 2012 app on Facebook. The app was able to identify their Facebook friends who fit favorable profiles located in key swing states such as Ohio, encouraging them to contact these friends to remind them to vote. Sources say one in five of those contacted this way were influenced positively by this contact.

The Obama campaign transformed their marketing approach centered around data. They demonstrated incredible discipline to capture data across multiple sources and then inform every element of the marketing—direct-to-consumer, on-the-ground efforts, unpaid and paid media. Their ability to dissect potential prospects into narrow segments or even at an individual level and develop specific relevant messaging created highly persuasive communications. And finally, their approach to tapping their committed fans was hugely powerful. The Obama campaign provides a compelling case for companies to build their marketing expertise around big data and microtargeting.

DATA IS DRIVING AN ERA OF ADAPTIVE MARKETING

The availability of data is ushering in a more real-time-led response by some brands, and this provides an interesting contrast to the more classic approach to planning media campaigns. At Mindshare they coined a term for this accelerated data-driven and consumer-focused mentality: "adaptive marketing." It's an approach that enables marketers to truly tailor their activities in rapid and unparalleled ways to meet their customers' interests and needs based on data. It's not just about advertising, but rather adapting every part of the marketing mix as well as the product itself to connect more consumers with the brand, make it more relevant to everyone, and deliver more benefits.

Adaptive marketing is a flexible approach in which marketers respond quickly to consumer behavior to create more relevant and impactful marketing.

Adaptive marketing is also about being more responsive to customers more quickly. Communication is an essential part of the approach.

THE MUSIC INDUSTRY HAS BEEN AN EARLY
PRACTITIONER OF ADAPTIVE MARKETING

The music business was arguably the first industry to be totally disrupted by the Internet. It's had to reinvent itself to be leaner, more relevant, more creative, and more savvy about marketing.

Interscope Records doesn't overplan its campaigns, said Jennifer Frommer,[10] a senior vice president of branded content and culture at the label, whose artists include Gwen Stefani and Eminem. Listening to the social signals and reaction on the street very much steers its next steps. Unlike most major marketers in other categories, which demand and exert total control over new product rollouts, Interscope almost always "leaks" a song or video—and tries to adapt its plans based on the response. The label had three attempts at marketing Robin Thicke, for example, each time making adjustments, before "officially" launching "Blurred Lines."

When Interscope was promoting the soundtrack to *The Great Gatsby*, Fergie and Q-Tip's "A Little Party Never Killed Nobody" started getting pick-up. That helped the label convince Samsung to copromote it, shoot a full musical video within a week, and release it as a single. The mantra, according to Frommer: "Listen, adapt, adjust and shift."

Of course, direct-response agencies have preached some element of response-based marketing for years. But the coming availability of addressable television, location-based and hyper-local media platforms, digital out-of-home, and the multitude of tablet and mobile media devices is making adaptive marketing a universal brand marketing opportunity.

ESTABLISHING AN ADAPTIVE MARKETING PRACTICE

Becoming an adaptive marketer can require serious structural changes. The entire media process—budgeting, planning, buying, and optimizing—needs to become more fluid and "always on," rather than static and sporadic. To put in place an adaptive marketing strategy requires a close partnership between media and content. Brands need to develop a library of creative assets—images, calls-to-action, and applications—that can instantly be deployed into advertising units when required.

In some cases, that content is being created in real time.
During the 2013 Super Bowl, the Oreo brand marketing team actually planned to create content specifically for that event. They established a social media command center and staffed it with creative, media, and social agency executives with the specific purpose of monitoring the event and looking to create content live.[11] They were given a gift when the stadium lights were accidently turned off, and they quickly responded, tweeting an image of the iconic Oreo, with the line, "You can still dunk in the dark," a play on the popular habit of dunking Oreos in milk. This was retweeted 15,000 times. Oreo's Twitter following, meanwhile, increased by about 8,000. The blackout post garnered nearly 20,000 likes on Facebook. And Oreo went from having 2,000 Instagram followers pregame to 36,000.[12]

ADAPTIVE MARKETING IN TRADITIONAL MEDIA

Aggregating, and then mining, buyer and audience data to allow personalized product development, marketing, and messaging is the key to unlocking adaptive marketing gold.

This is achieved through the integrated use of fast-moving data sources to drive actionable insight to adapt marketing across all media—digital, analog, social, and paid.

The precision, the immediacy in our ability to capture that data, and then deploy marketing communications is, we think, going to transform the way in which all brands are going evolve.

One great example of how a brand used fast-moving data to help a company plan an effective campaign is Kleenex in the UK.

USING SOCIAL LISTENING DATA TO DRIVE THE BRAND MEDIA STRATEGY

I mentioned at the start of this chapter that the Obama campaign reacted in real time in social media. But brands are using social listening

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CASE STUDY: KLEENEX IN THE UK ADAPTS THEIR MEDIA PLAN BASED ON GOOGLE ANALYTICS DATA

Kleenex in the UK had a major challenge when business was down significantly one season as the country experienced one of its warmest winters. The following season, they applied an adaptive marketing approach to their media strategy. Instead of advertising nationally, they worked with Google to understand in which parts of the country people were searching for flu and cough remedies, giving them valuable insight into where flu outbreaks were taking place. They were able to plan and deploy their television, print, and digital media at the moments and in areas where flu outbreaks were most prevalent. The data fed into a dashboard, giving the planning team a weekly recommendation for media activity. The resulting media plan enabled Kleenex to place 96 percent of their media budget into areas experiencing a live flu outbreak. Kleenex saw tissue box sales increase 40 percent over the previous year.

data to steer more strategic decisions about the overall brand and media strategy.

Nestlé routinely measures social media buzz with a focus on how its products are faring among opinion formers. If sentiment drops, "community managers" jump in to suggest a fix. Such give and take has "radically changed the relationship between our brands and the consumer," says Patrice Bula, Nestlé's marketing chief. "Today we have really entered the age of conversation."[13]

"Listening" has become a core practice for hotel chain Harrah's and led to changes in their offers and advertising. In online reviews, customers commented enthusiastically about the views from certain properties. Ogilvy, their agency, said these comments would not have been picked up by any other means. This prompted Harrah's to feature those views in their ads. That insight resulted in a 15–30 percent improvement in return on their online advertising.[14]

Samsung in the United States, a big investor in data, worked with insights firm Networked Insights to use real-time social listening to help the company keep a finger on the pulse of consumer sentiment and adjust their communications to capitalize on the web discussion about brands.

Within a couple of hours of Apple's Tim Cook revealing the iPhone 5, Samsung, reading the reaction in social channels, drafted new print, digital, and television ads. The following week, as the iPhone hit the stores, they aired television ads mocking Apple customers' lining up for the new phone and some of the device's less flattering features. The commercial was a hit, and received more than seventy million views online.

Samsung also use social listening as a real-time guide to evaluate how effective their ads are with consumers by measuring what people are saying about them and what effect they're having on competitors' brands. Stressing the importance of data in informing their marketing, Brian Wallace, the former vice president of marketing at Samsung, said, "The data guys lead these conversations. Not the creative guys. Not the sale guys. And it's not just analytics—its analysis." He added, "[data] does not crush the art of advertising. It simply informs it—and ultimately improves it." Samsung's shift to a strategy of employing social data at the center was one of the key

factors that assisted them in moving from the number four mobile device manufacturer to pass the mighty Apple.

PROGRAMMATIC BUYING DRIVEN BY DATA

The online ad world has evolved from buying through ad servers and ad networks, to audience targeting through exchanges, to real-time bidding (RTB) platforms. "Programmatic" is the term for this shift to a more automated and algorithmic buying and selling marketplace.

The goal, according to David Morgan, chief executive officer of the adtech company Simulmedia, explains that the idea behind programmatic trading is to use technology to help agencies and marketers plan and buy media more efficiently and effectively.[15]

Programmatic looks to move the day-to-day guesswork and gut decisions of tactical decisions of buying and selling media to a world where machines are driving decision-making. Decisions such as environment and quality give way to audience context and profile.

Programmatic media systems that have been developed by agency groups provide more comprehensive, more robust, and more granular data and insights about the results of each and every advertiser campaign. They provide a platform to use those results to drive their key business metrics, whether they are cross-media reach, audience duplication, or correlation or contribution to sales.

The programmatic movement started in online display. It has quickly moved to online and mobile video, while the big prize will surely be other more traditional media channels. Companies are looking into out-of-home and television. The large agency groups are investing in programmatic buying systems, such as WPP's Xaxis and Publicis Groupe's Audience on Demand. They like the access to data, the transparency and access to the marketplace, and the efficiency of transactions. Many media companies, particularly the premium content sites, are concerned about this development. They worry about the threat of potentially driving lower pricing on inventory as supply exceeds demand. However, from my perspective, it is a significant movement that puts a premium on data to create smarter targeting.

Programmatic is creating more relevant brand occasions

Programmatic is a significant media development for communication planners as it is opening up more branded communication opportunities that weren't available to us before.

For example, different life-stage events could prompt individuals to make large purchases or even change financial services companies. Uncovering data about an individual on the content he/she views or even just personal updates on his/her Facebook profile could allow companies to target people as they are graduating from college, getting married, having their first child, or are about to retire. These are opportunities to segment and target them with very specific brand messaging and products.

Another case could be niche products that marketers would not feasibly consider advertising, such as a food manufacturer that sells different varieties of sauces for Chinese, Italian, or Indian food. In the past, such a manufacturer would likely not advertise in broader media, as the volumes of each individual line would be too costly to advertise or it would be too wasteful to feature specific ads in media such as food magazines. But by identifying the likely targets by the different content, such as recipe sites or search engine activity, they can reach potential purchasers more easily.

Data is the new black

Data is pushing media into delivering the level of personalization that previously was only the domain of direct marketing. The ability to be more relevant, persuasive, and efficient in media communications is exciting enough. But to be able to deploy these qualities at scale through technologies that allow microtargeting, geolocation, or adaptive planning will be a game changer in brand communications. The data planner will be the communications planners' best friend for years to come.

QUESTIONS TO ASK TO BUILD BIG DATA INTO YOUR BRAND MEDIA STRATEGY

1. What new insights into the consumer can fast-moving data sources provide for the campaign you're planning?

2. What sub- or microtargets can be identified and what customized brand messages could be targeted to them?
3. Beyond target demographics, are there opportunities to target by context, location, occasion, or other?
4. Is there an opportunity to be more real-time and adaptive with the media plan in order to improve the results?

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