

Brands selling Brands

Just what is media property's brand value and how does one leverage it when planning a campaign?

In a recent conversation with one of our clients, we delved deep into the process by which we review and select the media that we use for different campaigns. Of particular importance to the client was an understanding of the decisive factors we use when making our selections.

As we ran through the usual criteria (audience composition, coverage, contextual relevance, ability to match with creative constraints, price, frequency), I happened to mention "brand strength and qualities". At this point we broadened the conversation into a deeper analysis of what this entails; how it might be judged and evaluated; and what the real benefits of a strong media brand are.

Clearly, different media companies invest significant sums to develop audience loyalty; mainly through the content and style that they create. Good examples can be seen in TV marketplaces where Fox News and MSNBC are visibly leveraging a content strategy that places them poles apart in terms of the brand they are creating, even though they occupy the same space. One of the other big news organizations, CNN, strives to develop a different position again. In the business magazine space, Forbes, Fortune, Business Week and The Economist are all striving (and succeeding) to differentiate their positions through redesigns and content management. In the newspaper space The Wall Street Journal jockeys to shift some of its brand appeal to compete more effectively against The New York Times.

When selecting media companies or properties to work with, advertisers need to think about what the media brand says to its audience and what it will imply about those that advertise. For example, Howard Stern and Rush Limbaugh both offer large audience numbers and fanatically loyal and engaged listeners. Just Media have used both in the same campaign for a client - but to achieve different results and with considerations made to the brand relationship that each delivers.

But branding impact goes way beyond the obvious. This year EMC went global with a major brand initiative that included airport advertising in the media mix. After initially discussing some strategic options (reach versus frequency) the client and Just Media agreed to "go big" and make major investments in selected placements. With this in mind we reviewed the data for major global business hubs, audience demographics, airline profiles, etc., and selected our ideal locations that included London Heathrow, Paris Charles de Gaulle, Dubai and Singapore. Then we turned our attention to branding considerations and traveled the globe to visit airports to get a 'feel' for each location. Consider Heathrow. It

has five terminals. Some are desperately old and are frankly an embarrassment (thankfully all are being refurbished hastily for the 2012 Olympics). However Terminal 5 is brand new. It's spacious, vibrant, oozes quality and class; and significantly is more modern, innovative and delivers a more positive travel experience. These "brand attributes" exactly match the positives we wanted for our campaign.

In Paris, the airport has at least nine major terminal sections and each has a very distinct look and feel. Only by looking at this brand value were we able to realistically select the locations that match the goals we had set. Indeed several terminals with superior passenger data were dropped because the brand experience of the location was not appropriate to the brand image we wanted to reinforce by our location selection.

Even within media properties, there are examples of different branded content changing the image that is delivered to a client's campaign. For Autonomy we have regularly advertised in the Wall Street Journal, but when the brief changed to focus on new, more marketing focused messaging we adjusted the buy to use the All Things Digital subsection which offers a different brand perspective and audience expectation even though it exists under the WSJ brand. We can extenuate the innovation in the product line while still underpinning the serious business application.

It can also be important to consider how media brands can be leveraged to complement each other. We have often used The Economist and Wired Magazine in the same media buy. In terms of brand these two publications could not be further apart. So why combine them? Wired obviously brings brand elements such as innovation, future, leading edge, risk taking, thought provoking and tech influencing. The Economist on the other hand brings brand elements such as global, intelligent, trustworthy, serious, analytical, thorough, robust and considered. Combined, these brands can help establish a client as a serious global technology player with innovative but entirely trustworthy products that are a perfect fit for businesses that want to look to the future and be leaders in their field... Brands selling a brand.

We have numerous other examples of this quite explicit selection of media to underpin brand attributes that our clients want to achieve. In each case we have tended to add this element to the media mix without specific requests from our clients. It's part of the value we add in being media experts that goes beyond the hard and fast data points that are first to mind within the media briefing process.



Here though are some tips when considering what media brands can bring to your campaign and how you can leverage them:

- 1/ Take a step back and consider what qualities are most commonly associated with media in your consideration set.
- 2/ Talk to others. Never use the 'sample size of one' approach because we all have natural biases for and against different media properties based on our own personal brand values.
- 3/ Think about your company brand attributes (both current and your aspirations) and look for matches in the media partners.
- 4/ Don't expect any one media brand to hit all the brand attributes you want. Mix in media brands that have very defined places in the overall brand picture. Consider the reality that the more defined the brand attributes of the media you use; the more that will reflect on your brand too.
- 5/ Discuss brand extension with your agency or media partners. You may find there are excellent opportunities to engage even further to really the exploit brand essence that a media company can bring through enhanced programs like conferences, guest speakers and content.
- 6/ Consider how messaging may be reinforced by the media you use. In some cases also look at where creative messaging may be misaligned with media brand attributes and adjust accordingly.

It's not often that your message will be helped if your brand desires don't match with those of the media you use. Consider after all that the audience will select the media because they are comfortable with how the brand attributes align with their own personal brand values. Leverage that and succeed.

DICK REED CEO

Just Media, Inc. | 6475 Christie Ave Suite 100 | Emeryville, CA 94608

P: 510.740.2300 x18

F: 510.740.2301

www.justmedia.com



"Celebrating 15 Years of Excellence - 1996-2011"