

How to survive in media sales

Media sales teams are under pressure from a multichannel world. A world in which some of their skills may be replaced by algorithms as programmatic media houses take over some of the inventory from publishers. A world with new job descriptions that didn't exist even five years ago.



Image by 123RF

Cindy Diamond, group sales director at [Mediamark](#), explains that brands and agencies are now turning to their media partners for greater collaboration in constructing solutions rather than simply placing generic schedules. This partnership has grown to include conceptualising, executing, measuring and optimising campaigns.

This means that media sales representatives are under pressure to improve their consultative selling skills, understanding of technology, and ability to access and absorb relevant data to remain competitive in today's multichannel environment.

Holistic advertising

Says Diamond: "Today's leading brands are thinking about their marketing and advertising in a more integrated and holistic manner. The allocation of spend to digital, PR, TV, outdoor and radio, is far more fluid as they begin to understand the connected customer and his/her experiences.

"This is best practice in a world where consumers devour a range of media — listening to the radio while they surf the web,

commenting on social media while they watch a show on TV, or searching for competitive prices while browsing goods in a store. This means that today's sales professional is required to have knowledge of human behaviour and an understanding of multiple media channels in order to compete in the integrated solutions space."

Diamond says that the skills required to be a leading media sales team lie in the ability to access relevant data, innovate and exploit collaboration opportunities in proposing competitive solutions to clients. An in-depth understanding of the media landscape will further enable the sales professional to influence campaign elements outside of his or her media offering, necessary to produce a return on investment.

Content for all

"Radio is still popular with media planners and brands because it is still popular with their customers," says Diamond.

"Regional radio stations have evolved into content platforms extending their engagement with their audiences through digital, mobile, social media and on the ground initiatives."

Diamond says that as technology and automation play an increasing role in the media buying process, the opportunity for the traditional media sales professional lies in his or her ability to connect the best of 'what worked' in the past with 'millennial thinking' which is currently carving out the future.

"Brands today are more interested in understanding how they can add to the consumer's experience and extend engagement than they are in what media type or channel is required to reach these audiences.

"Our role in media sales is to help brands stretch their budgets as far as possible and to maximise the value they get from their marketing campaigns. Media professionals that invest in building the right skills for this changing market will have a bright future."

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