

Media planning: How brands and agencies should strategise during the pandemic

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Once upon a time, in a world before Covid-19, brands sat with their creative teams and media agencies and planned calendar events for the 12-month period that lay ahead of them.



The calendar was populated with promotions that stretched from 'Back to School' to 'Christmas' and included everything from television ads, expos, wet demos, in-store activations, stokvel and brand takeovers.

In the period before Covid-19, this kind of media planning was backed by the fact that irrespective of season, the world was a consistent place. Since 2020, however, we have been plagued by the uncertainty of attaining and maintaining normality.



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For brands, agencies and retailers, this has, in many ways, affected the so-called 'calendar confidence' that guides the media planning process. Boardroom brainstorming sessions at the office have been replaced by Zoom strategy sessions from home and the conviction to pull off larger and more traditional advertising ideas has taken a back seat as we have all had to navigate national lockdowns and Covid-19 regulations.

In the context of retail, wholesale or spaza environments, bold ideas that rely on people, such as activations and wet demos, have been more severely affected by the pandemic. And, instead, channels like digital campaigns, fixed in-store media, gondola ends and point of sale material in store has been the first choice for many in order to ensure brand communication continuity.



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With the possible third wave emerging in South Africa, brands and agencies need to be reminded that media planning during a pandemic must be curated enthusiastically, but with continued consideration for people's health and safety. A plan that relies as little on people to bring ideas to life is most likely a safer plan, at least for now. We all look forward to the day where full through the line campaigns are executed holistically through multiple channels as before.

But, for now, with creatives and agencies still under pressure to deliver unique branding opportunities, we want to encourage companies to look for partners who are able to help with their continued brand efforts to create excitement for shoppers in-store without any risks.

If you are interested in hassle free and inexpensive advertising and POSM execution at a national level, please feel free to get hold of [MegaVision Media](mailto:info@mvmmedia.co.za).

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