

The *absolute truth* is a monthly newsletter published by Absolute Marketing Group. The goal of *the absolute truth* is to assist businesses in marketing their company effectively. Please email info@absolutemg.com to have *the absolute truth* emailed to you.

Why hire a media planner to plan your advertising budget?

By: Brian Meckler

Everyone talks about return on investment (ROI) and making marketing investments more accountable. A media planner can help you by providing operational efficiencies and allowing you to do more with less human resources. A good media planner will launch your advertising campaign from inception to execution. The process involves: planning, research, pricing, ordering, confirming, writing, production and bill reconciliation.

Planning – A media planner can handcraft an advertising schedule to complement your promotions and marketing strategy. They can plan your annual budget in advance to keep the stress down, to budget effectively and to take advantage of the best rates available. Each individual advertising campaign should be crafted and uniquely designed to meet the individual needs of each client. A media planner will help you determine the advantages and disadvantages of various advertising mediums for you.

Research – A media planner will research your competitor's advertisements and help you create a promotional strategy to put your business in position to win. In addition to researching the competition, they also closely examine cost-per-thousand and cost-per-rating-point comparisons to find the most efficient advertising vehicles. By calculating the number of actual prospects for a particular product who can be reached through a certain media, rather than the total audience size, can also help locate a more efficient advertising option.

Pricing – Media planners meet with advertising representatives to negotiate and determine the best price available. They will analyze which offer is the best value and worth your time to explore. Media planners work hard to stretch your budget and make every cent count. From negotiating competitive rates, favorable positioning and added value, you can depend on a media planner to negotiate aggressively on your behalf. They will negotiate lower prices, sometimes by buying a combination of advertisements for more than one client advertiser.

Ordering – Media planners create and send insertion orders to each media to verify rates and schedules. This step is especially important when dealing with time-sensitive deadlines.

Confirming – Media planners require each media vendor to validate the insertion order to decrease the chances of over-billing and overlooking scheduled ads and keeping vendors accountable.

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Writing – A good media planner will write the message for each ad thus keeping your advertising consistent to maximize your message saturation level.

Production – Media planners coordinate the design, production and proofing for each of your marketing elements thus keeping all of your communications consistent to maximize your advertising impact and investment.

Bill reconciliation – Media planners double-check your bills for accuracy. They will monitor your advertising to ensure 100% compliance and complete accuracy. You write only one check and the rest is taken care of.

The value of a media planner and your advertising is measurable by the increase in your sales. You can also depend on your media planner for guidance and direction and to be there every step of the process.

Upcoming Events

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| Oct. 17 | 11:30am | FM Ad Fed Luncheon at Best Western Doublewood Inn |
| Oct. 19 | 5:15pm | FM Ad Fed Alive After 5 at Big Daddy's Surf Bar & Grill |
| Oct. 20 | 7:00pm | Rape & Abuse Crisis Center Harvest Moon Fling at Holiday Inn |
| Oct. 21 | 2:30pm | NDSU Bison Football vs. Minnesota at Metrodome |
| Oct. 27 | 8:00pm | Bill Brasky's 5th Annual Bloody Bucket Bash at Fargo American Legion |