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## **Simplifying media planning and buying with professionalism can drive a sustainable media channel**

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### **Abstract**

For the purpose of study the ad-agencies actively functioning in Kolkata has taken into consideration. Kolkata is one of the attractions for ad-agencies as there is potential for growth. Almost all the leading ad-agencies including MNCs have their branches in Kolkata and rendering variety of services to the clients within and outside the state. There are high media and low budget clients expecting the varieties of services particularly in the wake of media explosion era. So the ad-agencies will undergo a significant change in the area of media planning and buying. India is a very nascent media market for advertisement and little or no rules will be applicable. So the need to professionalize media planning and buying strong and imminent.

**Keywords:** Satellite TV, Professionalization, media department, media planning and buying, top viewed programme

### **Introductions**

Professionalization of media planning function commences in the late 1970's and early 1980's with National Readership Survey II (NRS II) and NRS II confide together with this is the growth of television and monitoring of TV programme by Indian Market Research Bureau (IMRB) - Target audience Rating Point (TRP). Media planning developed into a lot more interesting and professional field. Still in India how to spend media money and to get the best impact out of advertising not an easy thing for the media proliferation is clubbed with the terrible ad-culture of the current times. And this situation can only worsen these days. Satellite channel made wild claims about the penetration of satellite TV to as high as 40 percent in the last three years (i.e., 1998 - 2000). The research industry is not geared to validate these claims. As a result clients are confused as media planner could not offer any reasonable or convincing strategy. As a result traditional agency media departments important declined.

### **Scope of the study**

Traditionally, the media function was considered the least important in ad-agency and the ad-agencies continue to pay only lip services to the importance of media related matters. Earlier media department was a just placement units, with almost no strategic planning to do. Now things are changed, the media planning process has become increasingly formidable because of the complexity of advertising phenomenon, the multiplicity of reasonable alternatives, and because of the economic consequences of the decision, the media find it difficult to identify the right means to achieve the maximum impact in media.

With the sudden burst of information and media proliferation, the client has become more demanding in these days. Both the large and the small advertisers are faced with the challenge in finding effective way to deal with the recent increase in media cost and media options.

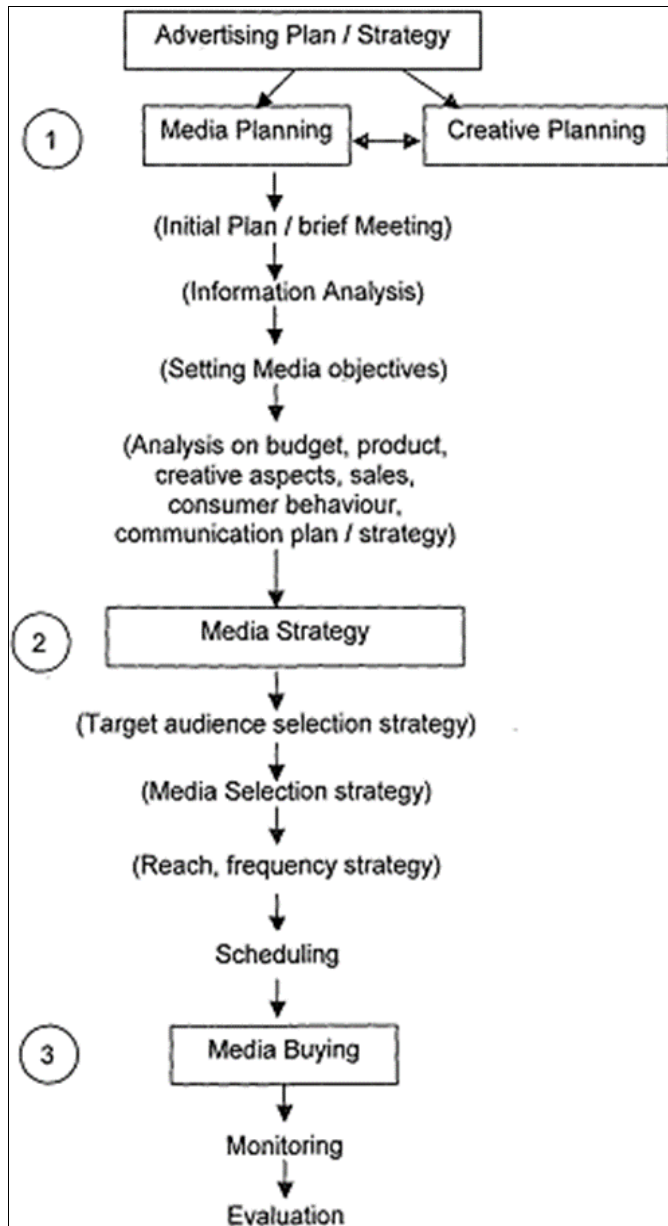
There is little investment in technology, proprietary research, little attempt has been made to improve the poor quality, user friendly syndicated research. The account manager has traditionally not been able to forecast brand business targets.

There is high lapping with the programme by the viewers, the media planner has difficulty in predicting the viewership at the time of scheduling and buying make media planning and buying more complicated.

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The trend towards the integrated marketing solution is creating a need for media-neutral compensation system, which are fair to the agency as well as fair to the clients. Media owners find it difficult to obtain commitments from agency media buyers. Yet wanted the lowest market place rates. So they began dealing directly with clients.

The developments taken place in the media field, like international tie-up, merger and acquisition, intervention of Media Independents (MIs), Consultancies in agency service and Agency of Record (AOR) make media planning and buying of ad-agencies are challenging. So there is an every scope to study media planning and buying of ad-agencies.



**Statement of the problem**

Today media planning and practice ranks in importance with marketing and creative planning. Media planning is an executive function because it has become so much more complex and important than it was years ago. Today’s planners must have a greater knowledge base from which to formulate media plans. The planners not only must know more about media, which have increased tremendously in number, but also must know more about marketing, research and advertising than did their predecessors.

Most importantly planners are called upon not only to make decision, but also to defend those decisions as the best that could be made after considering many alternatives.

The proliferation of media options, spiraling inflation in advertising cost, the growing number of advertisers i.e., more brands in each category of product, and the inability of the advertising budgets to keep up inflation are some of the factors that increase the need for serious media planning and practice.

Media planners today can juggle between various permutations and combinations for perfect media mix. Just few years ago, the choice was restricted to only few programmes. But today there are 24-hour channels devoted to news, sport, movies with sub categories in each.

Clients allocate huge amount for media, the prices for purchasing ads in the various media have risen rapidly. As a consequence clients demand want better proof than ever before that their money is well spent. The media planners are responsible for providing detailed and valid explanation for the media decisions.

Previously media buying was easy. The ability of the media buying was limited and the agencies had to distribute space/time slot, based on availability clients go beyond space/air time. Skill shortage of top viewed programme and readership. The negotiating skill, good relationship with media owners, leads to good media buy.

Agency-client relationships have paramount importance. Today the clients are constantly evaluating the work of their ad-agency and its rivals. The clients have doubts about how much to spend, through whom etc. clients have differing needs, but one factors unites today’s client is that they all demand accountability for the money spent on media. This will affect the traditional agency-client relationship above all.

The study was carried out with so many aspects related to media planning and buying with the following set of objectives.

**Objectives of the study**

1. To find out the crucial factors that determines the media planning.
2. To study the media planning strategies of ad-agency.
3. To examine the media buying technique of ad-agency.
4. To analyse the ad-agency client relationship.
5. To evaluate the problem faced by the ad-agency in media planning and implementation.

**Methodology**

The analytical based study on media planning and practices has been attempted with the specific objectives as spelt out above. There are national and state level ad-agencies contributing their might to the media industry. The parts played by both types of agencies are varied.

For the purpose of study, a stratified random sample of 25 ad- agencies in Kolkata, from as many as 75 actively functioning agencies in West Bengal, has been identified and selected. While selecting the sample the agencies, which are functioning national and state level are given weightage. For cross-section examination of the functioning of these agencies, a sample of 50 clients have been selected from client list furnished by ad-agencies.

Macro level data have been collected from various agencies and sources including from literature, articles, journals, books and others.

The primary data (micro level) have been collected through a detailed interview, schedule covering the areas of media planning factors and strategy, technique of media buying, agency-client relationship and the problems in media planning and buying. To support the above information, the media executive / director / planner, buyer were interviewed and the practice followed was ascertained.

Further a detailed interview schedule was administered for collection of primary data from clients regarding agency-client relationship factors, expectation from media planning and buying, agency selection strategy adopted, reason for client turnover etc.,

On the analysis segment, mathematical and statistical tools were used to test the framed hypothesis. The Friedman ANOVA and Kendall's coefficient of concordance for ranking scores helps to identify the significant agreement between ad-agency and clients, national and state level agencies on various issues. For comparison of ranking perception between ad-agencies and clients, national level and state level agencies on different issues are done with non-parametric Mann-Whitney 'U' test.

The comparisons of latent structure of ranking perception of agency and clients on various issues both the principal cluster mean scores of various components method of factor analysis and scree plot are used. Classification (groupings) of ad-agencies / planners by their ranking perception on different issues are analysed through measurement factors.

### Hypothesis

To test the above objectives the following the hypothesis are framed:

1. There is no significant difference between ad-agencies and clients in respect of their ranking sum scores of the issues considered in media initial / brief meeting.
2. There is no significant difference between ad-agencies and clients in respect of their rank sum scores of the information need for media planning.
3. There is no significant difference between national and state level ad-agencies in respect of their ranking of selection of target audience aspects.
4. There is no significant difference between state and national ad-agencies in respect of their rank sum scores of competitor's ad-effort analysis.
5. There is no significant difference between state level and national level ad-agencies in respect of their rank sum scores of the media selection.
6. There is no significant difference between ad-agencies and clients in respect of their rank sum scores of the client's expectation from ad-agency.
7. There is no significant difference between ad-agencies and clients in respect of their rank sum scores of the 'client's turnover reasons'.

### Limitations of the study

This study is made with certain predetermined limitations. Combination of agencies at the state and also functioning national level are selected who have extensive operation in Kolkata. In this study only the full service agencies are taken into consideration. Others like Media Independents (Mis), and Agency of Record (AORs) doing media planning and buying are not considered, because their role is specific and very much specialized.

The first chapter emphasis the importance of ad-agency role

and its services. It especially brings out the significance of media planning function of ad-agency, concepts and its practices, scope of the study, problem of the study, objectives, methodology and limitations.

### Conclusion

The second chapter comprises the review of literature made on books, journals, report, etc., views of the eminent authors, marketing experts, ad professionals, marketing and advertising academicians, experts views in the ad-agency are analysed generally and specially with reference to the objectives of the study. In the third chapter the information requirement for the media planning and the importance attached to the initial brief meeting, the issues considered by media planners with regard to consumer behaviour, communication strategy, objectives, budget, product, creativity, and sales, historical factors consideration are discussed.

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