

Better Together

Getting to 1+1 = 3

PETER WHELEHAN OF DMCM RESPONSE AGENCY ON WHY HAVING DATA IN GREAT SHAPE HELPS COMPANIES LEVERAGE MEDIA INTEGRATION

1. The main challenges facing clients?

The big challenges centre around data, firstly how to drill down and use the data they hold. Some clients are overwhelmed by the amount of customer information they have gathered. They may not have started off with robust processes or strategies around how best to take the data they have, analyse it and leverage it in an organised way to drive their marketing insights and campaign targeting. Planning is key to getting the best out of the data they hold.

Data is not the 'sexy' side of marketing. People get excited about the emotion associated with a clever and well-executed creative idea, or an engaging offer. But data remains the most crucial element of any DM campaign. No matter how strong the creative, offer, design, copy or call to action, if a campaign is poorly targeted, it will never lead to brand engagement.

Another big challenge for data is the impending GDPR compliance deadline next May. Clients are concerned about the time and resources it takes to get their 'houses in order' and what it costs them. But it should be seen as an investment, rather than a cost. Compliant data should reduce costs long-term. It should also provide deeper insights and more efficient, cost-effective targeting and ultimately better DM communications. Companies should see the new GDPR rules as an opportunity rather than a drag on time, resource and budget.

What is also key is that companies look further in to the future. They need the right skills and expertise to deal with ongoing data challenges beyond GDPR. Doing this will ensure they have efficient systems and processes in place to maintain the integrity of their data in an efficient and cost-effective manner. Staff must be properly trained and take responsibility for data or they could soon see the good work being undone pretty quickly after the deadline.

2. What's been a significant change?

Companies are now taking data more seriously. It had been a trend in recent years anyway, with concerns around breaches of data protection law. The GDPR deadline has accelerated the process of addressing data challenges for organisations in that they now have a clear deadline to hit, and one with significant potential penalties if they fail to comply.



SURPRISE RESULTS

Peter Whelehan says better together means that the different elements of a campaign and different media combine in an integrated way to ensure that 1+1=3 and that the totality of the results achieved by a campaign far outweigh the sum of the individual campaign parts.

However, GDPR is similar to the existing Data Protection Acts (1988 and 2003). If clients are compliant under current law, then much of what they do should remain valid. The GDPR adds new elements and improvements requiring detailed consideration by every business involved in processing personal data. Elements of GDPR will apply to different companies.

3 Your take on the winning media formula?

It depends on the brief, objectives and what a campaign looks to achieve. Each campaign strategy will have a different formula which works for the campaign brief. What is important is that agencies give clients objective advice on what works best. If a business has a database then direct marketing should be considered in targeting both existing and potential customers.

Well-targeted, creative direct mail should be considered for every communications plan as it offers benefits other channels cannot achieve. For starters, clients can be sure well-targeted direct mail will literally get in to the hands and in front of the eyes of the consumer they wish to target. Direct mail has a physical engagement with the brand which online does not have.

In a digital world, where anyone can send an email to any number of people at little or no cost, clutter abounds. The tangibility of direct mail – and ironically its associated cost – means people trust it more. The corollary of this is that it is good for the brand and, in turn, more likely to get noticed. A recent survey by Amárach Research for An Post proved as much.

The study found that the heavily digitally connected 18-25 year old market segment enjoy receiving direct mail due to the direct, personal, tangible and novel nature of it. In one way, it is counter-intuitive. But if you think about it for a minute, it makes sense. Direct mail is an uncluttered, direct channel which, when used properly, creates impact and drive strong results. It gives a measurable return on investment other channels cannot match.

4 What does 'better together' mean for media?

It means ensuring everyone involved in a campaign works together from the start of a campaign brief. The campaign must be properly planned from the outset. There is no room for silos in marketing departments, especially in large companies and agencies. Everyone needs to work together, be it market research, data planners and the insights team.

Peter Whelehan runs DMCM direct response

peterw@dmcm.ie

Please note the sentiments expressed in this article are the author's own views

