

MAGNETIC

Algorithms & editors – the importance of the human connection for advertisers

Daniela Eriksson, Manning Gottlieb OMD

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Big data, data targeting, programmatic trading, DMP's, sequential re-targeting... Dare I go on or have you stopped reading? All these terms blaze past us daily and we use them to inform our clients about how to best speak to their audience because that's what we are best placed to do. Or are we?

Accountable media has led us into thinking we can serve messages to exactly the right person at the right point in their purchase journey. And that may be so - but be genuine now, even if you are in the market for some new trainers, would a banner ad or a video that crops up on a website where you're reading your daily news really sway you? In our industry there's an infectious belief that we can win over the audience by disrupting their journey through serving an ad with a different brand's trainers when someone is searching for another product. Let me tell you, when you've come to this stage you've probably already made up your mind which brand you're going for.

If you are serious about changing someone's mind, start where they get their inspiration from - trusted sources, trusted people. 'Influencers' is one of the latest buzzwords media people love throwing about, but who are they? Today they can be anyone who's got a big social media following, but who came before them? Magazine and newspaper editors with an editorial voice. There's a reason why your Nan told you "if it's in the papers it must be true", because those editors are upheld to editorial integrity (I love that word, integrity). Social media influencers are rather difficult still to keep accountable, and remember - we do love accountable media.

Therefore we land in trust. A neat little word that has been in the trade press quite a lot recently following the release of Campaigns documentary *The Trust Crisis: Marketing's biggest challenge*, starring some of the biggest advertising names; Sir Martin Sorrell, Cindy Gallop and Joe Mandel. Ad fraud, ad blocking and an overall transparency issue of where money goes to and what it delivers is a massive problem and it's being questioned. How does that fit in with accountable media? Sure there are services such as Integral that serves the purpose of ensuring these things do not occur, but we're then back to the in-market banners and the pre-rolls to disrupt an already started purchase journey.

So back to where we started. Are we really best placed to know how to speak to our audience? I want to say no, but only because we are best at knowing where to speak to our audience. Magazine editors fight weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, quarterly and even annually to get to keep talking to their audience - they truly know how to speak to them. And on the plus side, they are accountable across all platforms too.

With turbulent ABC headlines magazine editors are become cleverer, expanding content onto other platforms and becoming event makers in their own rights. This is the time for brands to jump aboard and work with editors in this space. After all, editors are the ultimate influencers in their sector. If your brand works alongside them, they will facilitate a true connection with the audience without just serving them a sequentially targeted banner ad.

In a post Brexit time with dwindling consumer confidence, opt for editorial trust over data to build your brand and win over your audience.