

Sales and marketing, consumers and advertisers

This session explored how advertisers spend their budgets to get messages to consumers, how audiences divide their attention between entertainment and information services, shifts and cyclic changes, and expectations about regulatory and business tensions.

Louise McCann emphasised that branding needs to focus on the products and consumer sensory experiences. She stressed the importance of consistent advertising messages that make the service or product a 'hero' that does what it is said to do. One of the key challenges, among many, for broadcasters and other service providers in order to be successful, is to create highly functional and emotional relationships. Adding to the

challenge are the changing roles and needs of people at different times and in different environments. For example, the increases in online consumption, using the technology to find out how people feel, and radically changing how business is done.

Ian Alwill also cautioned about making generic assumptions about audiences. Using very loose segmentation based on age, he said that the generations perform very differently in relation to the media for their information and entertainment needs. The younger age group (12–25 years) is characteristically electronically wired, inquisitive, personally engaged, values instant access to communication and information, cannot live without the internet and they

Convened by Michael Gordon-Smith, former Member ABA with Louise McCann, CEO Australia and New Zealand, Research International, Ian Alwill, Director, Group Marketing and Communications, Nestle, and Russel Howcroft, Chairman, Advertising Federation of Australia.



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regularly sleep with their mobiles. He also cautioned against making assumptions about older generations, the 25–45 year olds for instance, who are media literate, electronically engaged, and speak to consumers directly. Older generations, who have tended to prefer traditional media, are now changing and engaging more electronically. This was interpreted as a substantial shift rather than a cyclic generational change.

In turn, marketing practices and business models must change to get messages out in an effective and efficient way, for example, by using personalised messages, interactivity, multichannelling. Not enough companies are doing this and broadcasters need to encourage it. New means would be more measurably cost-efficient than the traditional methods used to reach older groups. With increased resistance to reaching audiences through the mass media, increased pressure from regulators, and the need for new marketing methods, it is important to reassess responsibilities, be well-managed, and oversee self-regulation for the business.

Russel Howcroft emphasised the importance

of bigger and better ideas in the advertising and marketing world. The sequence is: first the commercially-driven content ideas followed by decisions about channel planning (television, SMS) which should fall into place later. The nature of the business is changing in the direction of the 'big ad' which spends more on ideas and less on distribution, for example, when advertisers mix program content and marketing ideas. There is a trend away from broadcast advertising as narrowcast becomes more popular.

Subsequent discussion covered the ongoing importance of television and its capacity to reach mass audiences, the ability of television to deliver emotion, the learning process that marketing and advertising organisations need to go through, the difficulty of integrating products with program content and the dangers of damaging a brand if it is not done well, questions about how to use the large amounts of data collected about consumers, the importance of speeding the process from awareness to sale, ethical considerations in separating editorial and entertainment content, and imperatives on advertisers and business to self-regulate.



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