



# Into the Deep: The Data Evolution in MEDIA PLANNING

*Peeling Back the Onion in Reverse Gets Us Closer Than Ever to HCPs*

*Data doesn't just improve the media planning strategy for the usual channels, it also improves how to optimize search and clinical content among other complementary media channels.*

**C**lients will often ask us what special things we could do to promote a brand. Special is the operative word, because in media planning today, clients are always seeking the things that will help not only to promote their brands, but to do so in a better, stronger, faster way than before. The answer for all clients with brand challenges today is the same: data.

## Using Data Wisely and Cost-Effectively

Technology is constantly changing, and looking back to the way we planned 10 and even two years ago, we're looking at a completely different landscape. Data today are affecting everything in our lives, both professionally and personally. Over the last two years it has become perhaps the hottest topic at pharma marketing conferences and the boardrooms of agencies across the world.

Data are the darling of media today. Using data sounds expensive, but it can actually be very budget friendly. It's a science and an art, and it applies to nearly every marketing challenge. Have a tight budget but need to see results? Data. Launching a brand? Data. Brand needs a mid-lifecycle push? Data. Need to reach only pediatric oncologists in North Dakota who love their iPads? Data, data, data.

Data have given us a clear window in to physician preferences today. But you may be reading this and saying, "we've always known what doctors are doing — it's our business." And that is very true. We have always known that we can bucket doctors into different categories in order to better engage them — and this is a practice that is still relevant and important. Maybe your audience is mainly gastroenterologists, and you know they're "tinkers," so you promote more educational items to engage them, such as gaming. Or you focus on neurologists and studies show they're "high science" so you ensure that you use media that

challenges them intellectually rather than ones that can only carry a brief awareness message. That works, it's strategic and it's smart. But today we can dig even deeper for better results.

## The Evolving Strategy of Media Planning

Data have evolved, and media planning has evolved. Ten years ago it was enough to say that we know your Doctor A list is more important than your Doctor B list, so we'll match your A list with publisher number 1 who can reach 75% of your list, take the same list to publisher number 2 who can reach 68% of your list, dedupe, and you have reached about 81% of your audience. Not too shabby.

But again, data have evolved. Media planning now starts with the medium — or more specifically, it starts with your audience members' media preferences. We start with your Doctor A list — the ones you are looking to move. Then we analyze the data on that group of docs. They cease to be the Doctor A list, and instead become individuals with specific preferences. From the data, we know that 346 of them prefer mobile as a primary channel, and of those 281 prefer print as a secondary channel. So for wave one, our first look will be to the mobile space, while wave two will be to print. The channels will be used at varying levels, depending on doctors' preferences and the individual medium's reach. We continue to layer on (think the reverse of peeling an onion) our engagements/exposures, personalizing frequency for each segment. We combine what we know of the message, the ideal vehicle to deliver it depending on its complexity, and the places we can reach our targets. Thanks to the

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data we now have access to, we're already in the channel of preference before we go to the media level.

For example, for a cardiology brand we would start by looking at our Media Vitals data into what we know about this group of doctors. The top media channel preference is medical conventions (70% rating 4 or 5 on a 1-5 scale), followed by print journals (69%), CME programs (63%), and medical databases (55%).

Now let's look at oncologists. They only differ slightly from cardiologists when it comes to preference of medical conventions (71%), print journals (73%) and CME programs (62%) but they have a much higher preference when it comes to medical databases (78%).

Data doesn't just improve the media planning strategy for the usual channels, it also improves how to optimize search and clinical content among other complementary media channels. Data allow us to have a much more intelligent conversation with all of our suppliers.

Common sense will continue to be the central tool for strategic media planners. Data are the perfect complement to that. Data help us understand our audiences at a deeper level, and there is no better way than audience understanding to lead to full engagement. **PV**

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