

“Without question, new media has changed healthcare advertising campaigns.”

DREW DESJARDINS / Dudnyk

# NEW MEDIA *Pushes Boundaries of* Yesterday's Advertising

Digital is here to stay and the advertising world, like everyone else, is feeling the impact.

**T**he impact of new media, including mobile, social networks, and digital capabilities, will change the shape of advertising campaigns in the years to come. By 2016, Forrester Research predicts that interactive marketing spending is headed for \$76.6 billion, equal with what marketers spend today on TV. According to our experts, the mobile Web will continue to force integration, segmentation, and transparency.

Gone are the days of having a strong jour-

nal media spend, a master visual aid, and a robust conference presence. Gone also are the days when campaigns were defined and amplified through sheer spending power.

“It’s not that long ago that medical journals were full of multi-page glossy ad inserts,” says Ane Jones, managing director at BioLumina. “With the ability to direct readers to the Web for supporting messages, the average ad unit size has decreased significantly.”

That doesn’t mean the advertising campaign of the future is not without options.

“Now, it’s easy to send the reader to a website for more information, especially with the advent of the QR code,” Ms. Jones says. “Online communication and mobile advertising have allowed marketers to bring brands to life by creating a richer brand experience, resulting in stronger relationships with target audiences.”

With the ability to customize online and mobile messages by target, marketers can communicate on a more meaningful level. As such, the digital execution of a campaign is no

longer an afterthought but is now considered at the conceptual stage.

"The tipping point has arrived where digital is part of the conversation from the start," says Mark Bard, co-founder of The Digital Health Coalition. "But the allocation and spend on digital as a component of total spend remains limited. One of the key challenges is achieving scale through efficient platforms or networks on a large scale. The emergence of the mega-portals for health and wellness along with social platforms reaching more than half of the adult population are changing the game and creating awareness that digital represents the market and not the technology elite."

"Without question, new media has changed healthcare advertising campaigns dramatically over the past several years," says Drew Desjardins, senior VP, strategic planning and account management, Dudnyk. "The key challenge with brands these days is knowing how to reach specialty physicians and their patients in an age of media fragmentation."

Today's new media not only has more potential to reach and mobilize customers, but can do so with laser-like targeting.

"Today's marketers can now operate with a scalpel instead of an axe to pinpoint people where they live, work, and play, and have the ability to move their customers into action," says Mike Rutstein, founder and president of StrikeForce Communications. "This is having a dramatic effect on how campaigns are conceived and executed."

## Breaking Through White Noise

With more possibilities and more channels comes more noise, and rising above it is an ultimate challenge, our experts say. A brand needs to stand out, but not interrupt, and needs to be edgy, yet meaningful.

"The noise level continues to rise, which is why brands need to focus on having a great proposition; a strong, focused, well-executed brand strategy is essential," says Guy Mastriion, chief global creative officer, Palio. "Then the brand team needs to have the guts to put a smartly executed, edgy campaign to work in the marketplace."

According to experts, the classic "interruption" model of advertising is being turned on its head by the digital revolution.

"First, marketers need to focus on creating ideas that are flexible enough to adapt to the growing number of channels that reach both prescribers and patients," says Abby Mansfield, senior VP, creative director, Topin & Associates. "Second, the information and content must be relevant and valuable, so the brand is perceived as helpful and not interruptive. Marketers also need to figure out how to satisfy both the search engines' need for key words and the customer's

need for well-written, quality information about what brand can do for them."

If brand communication can accomplish this, the value of the brand will break through to all audiences."

Providing value helps to break through the thinking that brands need to engage with consumers and physicians separately.

"Clients still expect to shape the moments of collision between the consumer of healthcare and the provider of healthcare in separate camps, but if marketers alter the dynamics in a way that improves outcomes, they will break through," says Joe Daley, president of GSW Worldwide. "Providing value to consumers of healthcare happens when they bounce up against moments of choice and the brand is there to help inform. Advertising can't be about altering just product choice, it has to influence all choices that advance health and wellness. Accomplishing this goal requires a connected understanding of the customer experience and the dynamics that shape that experience."

According to Ane Jones, managing director, BioLumina, there is an epidemic of information overload today and capturing the attention of a target audience is more difficult than ever before. Therefore, it is becoming increasingly important to have single-minded creative executions that will resonate with customers, she says.

"Focusing on the best the brand has to offer based on deep customer insights is the way to go," Ms. Jones says. "But to change physician attitudes and beliefs as well as break through the clutter, creative needs to be provocative."

Another key challenge in gaining the attention of the target audience is finding ways to stand out in a sea of sameness across media channels. Maintaining the integrity and the originality of the creative idea after it has been vetted through rounds of market research can be challenging, Ms. Jones says.

"Often the freshness of the creative idea can become diluted and conventionalized so it doesn't challenge the audience enough," Ms. Jones adds.

Stephanie Murrin, chief creative officer, HealthEd, says while there are many challenges, two are of particular importance: regulations and trust.

**"Marketers need to focus on creating ideas that are flexible enough to adapt to the growing number of channels."**

**ABBY MANSFIELD / Topin & Associates**



**"Today's marketers can now operate with a scalpel instead of an axe to pinpoint consumers."**

**MIKE RUTSTEIN / StrikeForce Communications**

"Regulations have an enormous affect on the work being done in the healthcare space," she says. "This can cause a generous amount of lifestyle or beach strolling creative that starts to blend across disease states and brands. In many cases, by covering up the logo the creative can apply to 10 other brands. Finding new avenues to engage a consumer with the brand story is critical."

The second big challenge, she says is pretty obvious, and that is consumers' skepticism of big pharma.

"If the message smells like a sales aid or side effects, they tune out," she says. "But when a message is conveyed as creative education and works at engaging consumers in their own



**“ Digital today represents the whole market and not just the technology elite. ”**

**MARK BARD** / The Digital Health Coalition

**“ A brand will always need a great story; the big difference now is user experience and their engagement with the brand. ”**

**GUY MASTRION** / Palio

**“ Advertising can't be about altering just product choice; it has to influence all choices that advance health and wellness. ”**

**JOE DALEY** / GSW Worldwide

care, it takes on a different meaning. Informed decisions result in better outcomes.”

Not only does a message have to resonate and inspire trust and confidence, it also has to be easily understood and should be coordinated across all channels.

“Having a balanced approach regarding the use of print, Web, Google, medical information sites, blogs, YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter is both an art and a science,” Mr. Desjardins says. “Success in an integrated brand marketing campaign in today's new media environment is measured by how well the customer can understand the message and relate to it and each tactic should work in harmony with the overall strategy.

“To achieve a truly compelling integrated brand experience that adds value for the target audience and also maximizes the performance of the tactics, there must be a cohesive strategy,” he continues. “Every interaction among the physician, patient, company, and product — from rep experience to managed markets to brand website — has to represent the new advertising campaign.”

Ms. Jones says in addition to the standard criteria, such as stopping power, single-mindedness, uniqueness, and persuasiveness, an effective advertising campaign should be based on a big idea that has the proverbial “legs” to work across multiple channels and geographies.

“Big ideas that travel across borders and channels are key to driving impact and efficiency,” she says. “In today's global community, giving a brand one consistent voice will help drive the message home and maximize the ROI.”

The big idea of today has turned into the small idea, according to Mike Rutstein, founder and president of StrikeForce Communications.

“And this is not a good thing for the industry,” he says. “With so much chatter over new channels, the art of creating a powerful and memorable campaign is getting lost. Today, there are more talking brands and functional stories — messages that promote brand benefits and attributes rather than tell

a holistic brand story — that come out of provocative and compelling customer insights. Agencies need to hit the reset button and get back to basics. A big idea is still a big idea. The best ideas create a world of possibilities, helping marketers reach and engage their customers.”

Mr. Mastrion of Palio says engagement and telling a story will be two important factors in the success of campaigns in the future.

“A brand still needs and will always need a great proposition or story, the big difference now is user experience and what that means for audience engagement relative to the brand story,” he says. “Engaging versus simply enabling is more important than ever before, now that we have so many tools and opportunities for participation.”

Brands shouldn't try to engage with every customer — that is not the key to success, Mr. Mastrion says.

“The more customers who have positive public engagements, the bigger the brand story becomes,” he says. “This is equivalent to the amplification of the brand via word of mouth, and customer-endorsed engagement looks like one of the new benchmarks for success for brands that choose to live in the public arena of new media.” **PV**

## EXPERTS



**MARK BARD.** Co-founder, The Digital Health Coalition, a nonprofit organization, which was created to serve as the

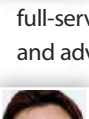
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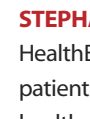
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