

The future of media planning is about the customer journey

By [Graham Deneys](#)

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This year's buzzword is disruption. The issue with this though, is that it is a "how long is a piece of string" situation. There's disruption and then there is earth shattering movement that redefines media as we know it. In this case, I prefer to move away from the word "disruption" and label it more along the lines of comfort zone destruction.



Graham Deneys

The media industry has been doing a great job of delivering reach and frequency within prescribed and sometimes "disruptive" ad parameters but let's be honest, I'm not sure we fully anticipated the direction things are moving in. Even our friends at Google have started to adjust their approach. Typing a word into a search box might become obsolete in the not too distant future, and they are moving fast to ensure that they stay the "just google it" of our lives.

Micro-casting

Within this space we are seeing quite a few trends emerging and one of the trends that certainly is causing us to shift our thinking is Micro-casting. Consumers are now fully embracing messenger platforms as social networks, rather than the old school way of broadcasting every moment to every "friend" you have, including your nosey aunt.

Moments themselves have changed completely, they have extended, segmented and continue to grow. We used to be content attending a music concert with our friends, now we have to strategically attend concerts via our social channels. Micro-casting your concert experience through a carefully curated plan has trumped the actual concert experience.

In a nutshell, consumer journeys have morphed into rather unpredictable mini adventures and this is the future of media planning. Serving the right message at the right time has become increasingly difficult and planning tools are going to need to catch up quickly or risk becoming significantly dated.

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Moving from TV plans to video plans is just one example of how we should be approaching media. Online video is growing rapidly, and won't slow down anytime soon. Not for a minute am I trying to suggest that TV isn't relevant, but more when we think "moving pictures" we shouldn't automatically just think TV, when we could be getting huge initial incremental reach by combining both TV and online video. Here at Carat, we call it the 'TV stack' approach and it has proven again and again that it delivers on key client objectives.

Media first

In 2017 things are going to accelerate further into the unknown and we are going to have to think "Media First" when approaching objectives. I say this because there is a need to fully understand all the micro-moments in a consumer's daily life to stay relevant as brands while adjusting our budget allocations accordingly. We need to know which touchpoints are most relevant to our audience at which micro-moment and then adjust creative thinking to facilitate conversation and relevance. Perhaps our creative won't resemble an ad at all, but more a step to move the consumer from one point to another with a specific goal in mind.

In addition to this, we are going to have to embrace the art of constant adaptation and adjustment. Consumers are telling us what they want, and by us answering this call with what we currently have available from a systems and creative point of view, just won't cut it. Google is moving fast and so should we.

In 2017, we are going to have to take a long, hard look at current systems, platforms, tools and measurement techniques and ask ourselves whether these actually deliver on our consumers' wants and needs in this rapidly morphing landscape and of course, whether these industry assets assist in delivering our business goals.

All in all, not an easy task, however it certainly is an exciting one.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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