IOR
INDIAN OUTSOURCING REVIEW
September 2020

Why it's best to integrate TV advertising and Digital Marketing during Covid-19 Pandemic

Television has come a long way in the past few years, as marketers realized they have more data than they thought. With big data integration, set-top box data, and smart TV data, drilling down in the linear world is now possible. Traditional television outlets also realized that instead of viewing digital as a competitor, they were better off embracing online marketing because, when using both channels together, a campaign is more impactful. Viewers interact with multiple screens simultaneously, spending time on search or social while they're watching TV. Shows can also be watched, rewatched, and binge-watched with time-delayed viewing, video on demand, and over-the-top subscriptions like Amazon Prime, Hotstar or Netflix. The result is a blurred line between TV and digital, which you can take advantage of for cross-channel data and a wider, more targeted reach. As television continues to increase the data overlay, the similarities with digital channels are growing.

Television is still the focal point of most living rooms, and brands that advertise on TV have greater credibility, better brand awareness, and higher response rates. TV and digital advertising have a synergistic effect when they work in tandem. Digital advertising helps add more touchpoints to TV advertising, and television ads lend credibility and scale to digital advertising. Running a TV ad will also help improve open rates on emails, increase the response to Facebook ads, and reinforce the brand's message. Digital supplements TV with additional touchpoints such as paid search engine ads, audience retargeting, display ads, and social media. Always run a TV campaign in conjunction with a search engine marketing or retargeting campaign; by marrying the two, you amplify reach and response while still being able to micro-target.

While change came slowly to television marketing, smart TV marketers are now combining the traditional advantages of broad reach and engagement with digital savvy to segment, test, and reengage audiences. Television should be a key component of any advertising campaign, and with the addition of more data, television is drilling down to find the perfect customer while retaining the ability to scale, optimize, and influence all marketing channels.

The shifting landscape of TV is creating an interesting dilemma for advertisers. TV seemingly remains an important part of the marketing landscape, as a recent survey by eMarketer indicates that the majority (62%) of US internet users still watch TV using a cable or satellite service. However, with streaming services slowly creeping up on its lead and social media platforms launching their own networks, many advertisers are unsure how and when, or even if they should, transition their budget away from TV and invest more in digital channels.

While there is no easy, one-size-fits-all solution when finding the balance between TV and digital, there are a few things that every brand needs to consider before deciding when and how to move forward.

Don't miss opportunities to connect with a new demographic.

The case can be made that TV is a safe bet because it still gets significant viewership. However, as the graph below indicates, TV viewership is slowly giving way to other online streaming services.

Now, this isn't a call to abandon TV advertising altogether. Rather, this is a call for brands to start thinking ahead of the trends and consider how they can leverage digital channels to connect with consumers beyond traditional TV.

There is the chance of significant lost opportunity should brands ignore digital, and not just with Millennials and Gen Z. In the long run, if too much budget is devoted to TV, lost opportunities can be expected in every target demographic. In general, companies that shift their "traditional ad spend", such as TV to digital tend to have a bumpy migration. One reason may lie in the fact that companies lack the personnel intimately familiar with the changing viewing trends and the resulting advertising needs.

In a recent study, 30% of respondents from a Harvard Business Review Analytic Services survey say their organization's marketing professionals are very knowledgeable about the advertising opportunities associated with consumers watching programming on devices other than a television set. That means 70% of organizations are not confident in this arena. A foundational element in making the transition from traditional to digital marketing is having knowledgeable marketers to manage the shift. Without that, you risk not having a clear grasp of what is going on with your campaigns.

For instance, take vanity metrics. If you emphasize vanity metrics such as likes and followers, you can easily lose sight of metrics that show how a marketing campaign delivers against your overall marketing strategy and business goals, such as revenue growth. When deciding how to budget your ad spend and debating on spending on TV, or spending on digital, the answer is simple: Both. A recent study from the Advertising Research Foundation found that when you increase the number of platforms you advertise on, you increase your ROI by as much as 35 percent. That includes TV.

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