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Need help with media auditing?



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WFA offers five things you need to know about media auditing in APAC

24/06/2010

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This article was originally published in Campaign Asia-Pacific.

Media auditing is on the rise globally. WFA's APAC Media & Marketing Network shares five things marketers should know about media auditing.

Fifty-seven per cent of the World Federation of Advertiser (WFA) marketers now use a media auditor in Asia-Pacific. As it becomes a more common practice, the need has arisen for increased understanding of how to get the most from this potentially valuable service.

1. Your agency should support, not lead, the media auditing process.

It is down to the advertiser to find the auditor(s) who suits their own specific needs. Although the client may seek advice from their agency partners, the selection process should be independent of those being audited.

Once the auditor(s) is appointed, it is incumbent on the agencies to contribute to a collaborative advertiser-agency-media auditor relationship. Surprisingly, 25 per cent of WFA members in Asia-Pacific still view 'agency resistance' as a key barrier to successful media auditing. Marketers have the right to an independent perspective regarding their own investment. Their agency partners need to support them in this.

2. Who audits the media auditors?

One of the barriers to successful auditing faced by 50 per cent of WFA members in Asia-Pacific (and around the world) is that media auditing pools are too small for big advertisers.

Clients need their media auditors to be transparent in this regard. For example, where one advertiser represents more than 10 per cent of the pool, this should be disclosed.

Media auditors should, where necessary, allow clients to hire a neutral expert to examine the data and methodology being used. On a day-to-day level, however, it is down to the advertiser's own internal media experts to audit their auditors.

3. Countable is not always accountable.

Although media auditing has come a long way, there remains room for improvement. For example, only 27 per cent of WFA marketers in Asia-Pacific said that they are satisfied with their media auditor's performance in relation to auditing online.

Media auditors may struggle in some media and some markets owing to the lack of standardised, reliable measurement. This is particularly the case with interactive media.

Cost comparisons may be meaningless or, worse, misleading, if they don't refer to appropriate, consistent metrics. Advertisers need to devote special attention to the experience and expertise of their auditors in this area.

4. Seek confidentiality guarantees.

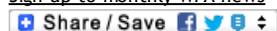
Some WFA members have later discovered that media auditors have used their data to inform other auditing pools without their permission. Media auditors should not pass on any information about their client or media agency's activities to any third party without explicit prior consent- even within their own multinational auditing network. Although in the majority of cases there is no issue with trust, it is recommended that the client-agency-media auditor relationship be supported by a non-disclosure agreement which reassures the three parties of confidentiality.

5. Local insight is critical.

As most media is purchased at a national level, so media auditing requires local insight to be truly effective. Many multinational marketers however struggle to find the necessary skill sets and experience at a local level. For example, 42 per cent of WFA members in Asia-Pacific said that they were concerned by a "lack of reliable suppliers in [their] markets". It is worth checking who actually conducts the work on a country-by-country basis. In some cases it may be better to postpone the audit for a specific market if the conditions of accuracy, reliability and confidentiality are not met.

WFA's APAC Media & Marketing Network is Chaired by Unilever's VP Media, Asia AMET, Rahul Welde. It is open to all WFA members based in the region and will meet next in Singapore on October 6th. For more information on the recent WFA guidelines on choosing and using media auditors, [click here](#). For further information please contact Robert Dreblow r.dreblow@wfanet.org

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