

More flexible plans, more buyer input needed



Gene Willhoft
Vice President, Director of media services
Ally & Gargano, New York

Gene Willhoft, media chief at Ally & Gargano, observes that the spot television rating arena 'changes daily, in all markets. Due in part to new independents, strong syndicated properties, and to a lesser extent cable, homogenous spot TV plans for many markets may be ill-advised.'

Willhoft points out that in many cases, "regardless of the number or types of markets, planners prescribe the same daypart parameters. A plan may call for just daytime, early and late news, with exact GRP levels planned for each market. Buyers may simply follow orders without question and purchase the goals ' without noting problems or suggesting ways to improve the schedule."

He explains, for example, that "On the West Coast, where late news ratings are generally low, it may make sense to revise goals and place more GRPs in early news. In many markets, syndicated programs outperform early news. Yet these shows may be considered 'off-limits' if the buyer is working strictly against the goals.

Granted, planners should open up rating books themselves to get the bead on local markets, but this becomes impractical in a big, multi-market buy."

All this, says Willhoft, "argues for two ideas that I believe make for a more effective spot television effort. First, daypart mixes and GRP goals must be flexible from one market to the next. The client must be made aware that this is in his or her best interest. Second, an atmosphere of free idea exchange must exist between the buying and planning groups."

Willhoft adds that, "In today's competitive world, where noise levels and clutter are higher than ever before, agencies must do everything they can to ensure that their clients are successful and prosper. Effective media buying, which involves buyers who are truly strategists, rather than negotiators only, and who add their input, is, I believe, the wave of the future. At this agency, our planners work very closely with the buying group. The benefit of planner-buyer teamwork in an open-idea atmosphere can vastly improve the qualitative and quantitative aspects of most spot television buys."

This article was printed from:

Absolute Media Inc.
A M I
Strategic Media Buying & Planning

Absolute Media Inc.
100 Prospect Street
Stamford, CT 06901

Phone: 203-327-9090
Fax: 203-323-1899

Email info@absolutemediainc.com
Web site: www.absolutemediainc.com