

# Fueling Campaign Creative

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

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Getting the right message to the right consumer at scale means folding creative into the programmatic mix.

Here are three steps to programmed creativity and a transformed advertising industry. By Norman Wagner, Managing Partner, Head of MediaCom Beyond Advertising, MediaCom Germany

Would it surprise you to know that the ads that we both see in our browsers are probably the same? Demographic and behavioral data may be available, but – if we both tick the same boxes for age and sites visited – there will be little to no difference in the creative served. And as we move closer and closer to a 100% programmatic world, we have to wonder how the need for custom messaging and creative will be addressed by a

technology optimized for efficiency and savings.

## Retargeting

The rapid rise of retargeting – reaching out to people who have looked at a specific product in the past but not yet purchased – is the first step toward a technology-driven process that still takes the consumer journey and preferences into account. Retargeting has clearly demonstrated its power for direct response clients in particular, as subsequent click and conversion rates skyrocket compared to classic product communications. Recent studies prove that average engagement rates for programmatically-served retargeted creative banners perform twice as well as standard units. But if this is the first stage of programmatic creativity, let's extend how we define "retargeting" in the first place. For example, we could ensure that consumers who show an interest in brand video content see more of it. That means that a consumer who watches to the end of one film would see more video content in the future than a second viewer who drops out more quickly.

## Content Consumption as Indicator

It's also possible to identify a consumer's point in the purchase journey from the path s/he took to an advertiser's branded content. We've just launched a Dell campaign in Germany that does exactly that. Designed to promote Dell's IT infrastructure B2B products, the campaign serves long-form content to a consumer who searches for cloud computing information on IT special interest websites, while a consumer who looks for similar information from a Google search might see dynamic banners that relate directly to Dell offers. But again, there's the potential to do so much more. Soon, we will launch a new always-on campaign that will enable a consumer to configure a car based on specific information the individual has seen in an ad. Then available data will dictate whether the user sees his or her car smoothly navigating steep and curvy roads or idling in front of a football field. All this can be done programmatically.

## Tools to Success

There are already new tools that enable us to build programmatic creative based on

audience and ambient data such as weather, time, location or placement to trigger the messages displayed to a particular target group. On desktop, it is already possible to stream a whole catalogue made up of thousands of dynamically-determined products, prices and text versions

through a single banner, but we can also do this in video formats. Our client HiPP, an organic baby food company, has used this technology to enable users to upload their photos into an online video and make it truly relevant. This approach has generated great outcomes in earned reach, as consumers excitedly share the end results across their social networks.

## Data and Creativity

Extending this process could make ads even more specific. While the traditional vista of an empty mountain road can highlight a sleek new car, for example, it might be more motivating for a consumer to see what the car looks like in his or her own neighborhood. Laughing kids in the backseat can trigger emotions, but a dog might catch the attention of adults with no children in the home. Similarly, a feature that allows consumers to get directions from the comfort of their own desks and forward it directly to satellite navigation is interesting, but – for drivers who use the same route every day – perhaps information about a car's fuel efficiency would be more impactful. The number of programmatic creative iterations is virtually unlimited. Facebook profile data that reveals which sports people prefer might alter what they see on screen. And for a brand that sponsors multiple sport clubs, this information could be used to determine which club is promoted. Achieving all this is not just about understanding the consumer journey and boosting our technological power; it must also change the way agencies work together, particularly when it comes to the creative process. And marketers must begin thinking about programmatic not as just an effective way to buy, but also the underpinnings of an entirely new way to communicate... and create. The possibilities are huge, and there's a long way to go but – like any consumer journey – we are confident that the end result will be infinitely rewarding.

Three steps to programmed creativity:

1. Chart the consumer journey to identify where variations in creative are likely to be most effective.
2. Develop the idea that can be adapted for multiple versioning and formats.
3. Test and adapt technology platforms that can support a high level of programmatic flexibility.

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