

7 steps to successful global campaigns

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Selin Cebeci shares the key questions you must ask to get results

I recently attended a dinner party with a group of people who had no knowledge of marketing, advertising or the media space. I have to admit, this was refreshing. But, when asked what I do for a living and I answered, the questions were endless. What does global media planning mean? Do you travel all over the world? How do you know if your work is successful? What is the global definition of success?

I explained that although I do travel, I don't need to visit every market. Thanks to technology, media can be bought through programmatic platforms from my desk or over the phone with the specific local market. Still, the question about success really hit me.

What really leads my team to success?

My initial answer was straightforward: hitting the goals and delivering the results we have set for the brand.

However, what work actually goes into meeting those brand goals? If I oversimplify it, it's making the right choices with media channels and media vendors. Making the right choices requires asking the right questions to get good results.

When evaluating vendors at a global level, here are seven questions we should never fail to ask.

So, what you really mean is...

Everyone defines metrics differently. Getting an international client or vendor's definition of certain industry terms and measurements helps avoid confusion down the road. I have been shocked how many times seemingly simple media terms like *engagement*, *brand initiatives*, *repeating customer* and *consideration* vary from market to market.

How's the weather?

This famous opening line to break the awkward silence actually works as a metaphoric reminder that every market has a different media landscape and conditions. We should expect different capabilities and unit prices, even when using the same vendor in campaigns across markets. It is important to clarify and understand those differences from the beginning.

If you could only bring one thing to an island, what would it be?

In many cases, brands are challenged to achieve multiple goals at the same time. Increasing brand awareness, changing brand perception, increasing consideration and generating incremental revenue. However, if the sufficient investment is lacking, it's better

to deliver on the most important task rather than trying to hit multiple goals. Clarifying upfront which goals are the most important. That way channel selection and KPIs will be more targeted against the most important brand goal.

Where is your fan club (aka audience)?

Even Beyoncé isn't equally as well known in all markets. A media vendor can be very strong in the USA, but might have no presence at all in other markets. Don't make assumptions, but rather request the audience size of each market.

Keep in mind, size doesn't matter in all situations. A media vendor's audience size should be compared to market population and/or target group size. If not, we may think there is a large audience sample in a large market such as India or China when it only represents 1% of the total audience.

Who do you know?

Which target groups are okay to reach? There are some media vendors who are generalists with a mass audience and others you can target based on certain profile information or third-party data segments. There are also vendors who specialize in certain verticals such as travel or technology. It's always good to understand where media vendors stand and what they do best.

How do you know each other?

This is a key question in selecting one vendor over the other. Many vendors claim to reach the same or similar audiences during their sales process. To decide how one is stronger than the other, knowing how they understand someone who is interested in buying a new car versus looking for an outdoor adventure is a must. What signals do they use to categorize a random internet user as a potential car buyer, traveler etc. Do they have first-party data? Is it a contextual data or 3rd party data segment? If it's 3rd party data segments – what's really in there? Which data partners supply the defined target group per market?

What makes you special?

Although I don't suggest asking this out loud, there are many vendors out there who are capable of (or claim to be capable of) delivering against the same goals and/or audiences. Checkboxes to look include their definition of targeting segments, account management resources behind a campaign, value-added research and competitive unit prices. Knowing helps to distinguish who is special and right for a brand or campaign.

Thinking back to that dinner and the question of defining success, asking that question is the right start because success ultimately depends on asking the right questions to achieve communication and alignment. Of course, these are my seven questions but depending on the length of the meal I'm sure you can always add more.

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