

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a credit card over a payment terminal. The card is silver and has the word 'Cashback' visible. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be a retail or service environment.

Ally Financial selects MediaCom as media agency

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In its quest to reach the next level of digital banking, Ally Financial has selected MediaCom to handle its media business, including buying and planning.

The news follows a competitive review dating back to March.

MediaCom “had the best combination of total creativity—not only in big thinking ideas, but also in the ways they use media and data and the analysis of that data,” says Andrea Brimmer, chief marketing and PR officer for the Detroit-based Ally. “We felt like their creative thinking and their media approach could really push us.”

MediaCom was one of four finalist agencies, including Wavemaker, 360i and incumbent Spark Foundry, in the review, which was run by Avidan Strategies. Ally had worked with

Spark for a decade. Spark deferred comment to Ally.

“We’re not parting on bad terms,” Brimmer says about Ally’s relationship with Spark.

“They’ve helped us advance our business and they’ve got a really cool thing going with how they’re approaching new business around this ‘Power of One.’” But she says that while Spark’s proposition was compelling, MediaCom’s “edge” around data and creativity led to its selection.

Sasha Savic, MediaCom’s U.S. CEO, says the agency “couldn’t be happier.”

“Our own desire to work with the most ambitious, disruptive brands in the market aligns perfectly with Ally’s mission to transform its industry,” he says.

The win comes as MediaCom is defending the accounts of Mars and Shell, which are reviewing their media businesses. HSBC, which had worked with MediaCom previously, handed its media account to PHD in May.

Ally is also reviewing its digital and creative accounts. Brimmer, who has been at Ally for around 10 years, expects to make a decision on both businesses next week.

The bank is paying all finalists in all three reviews a five-figure stipend: an anomaly at a time when most marketers are cutting back on agency fees.

Ally Financial, in its 10-K annual report filing for calendar 2017, reported “advertising and marketing” spending of \$133 million in 2017, up from \$112 million in 2016.

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