

The role of the medium is crucial for every planner

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At its simplest we know that the same advert for a diamond earring would get a different reaction if seen in Vogue Magazine or in refinery29. In the former the reaction would probably be that it was unaffordable. In the latter that it was a lovely bit of bling.

As well as the obvious prestige or accessibility provided by the immediate environment McLuhan cited the sensory differences of different media. A “hot” medium does the work for you – for example the Avengers movie, you can just sit in front of it and soak it up; a “cold” medium requires that you do the work – for example The Economist, you need to concentrate. These definitions may be now outdated and too binary, but what is true is that

the medium in which the message is received is crucial to a good comms strategy.

In addition “cheap” mass reach, with no consideration to the environment, frequency or channel, can be costly. The Advertising Association have provided [evidence](#) that ad bombardment is eroding audience trust. As Robert Rakowitz put it in his [call to action](#) for media sustainability, “reach at no cost is reach at all cost, what we need is reach with responsibility”.

The medium is the message is even more true now. The media are not just a vehicle or delivery system for ad messages. Media are also where people complain about customer service. It is a widely held belief amongst the informed public that the best and quickest way to get a response to a customer complaint is to [tweet](#) about it.

Its where people share their pride in a new purchase, or look for inspiration for what to buy next.

A one size fits all approach to this on the basis of last click attribution is both naïve and potentially harmful to the brand. As MediaCom’s Richard Davies explains this is nonsense: “Man wakes up with a terrible hangover, blames the last drink he had, the glass of water by his bed.”

The medium is where people shop, where they request samples and also where they dream, plan and collaborate. All of this must surely be of consideration when the copy for the advertising is planned.

There is no time in the history of media planning when it has been more significant to understand and consider the role of the medium in terms of its impact on the intended message from advertisers.

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This article was originally published on Sue Unerman's LinkedIn [profile](#).