

**CHAPTER 6: Media Types & Decision****Lesson 24: Media Planning & Decision****Learning Objectives**

- You will understand via this lesson the different types of media for advertising.
- You will also understand media selection and planning.
- You will understand via this lesson the strategic decisions in media.
- You will also understand the significance of media scheduling.
- The focus out here will also be on alternative media and a recapitulation of various media types.



The term media is plural for medium. In advertising terms, medium is a channel of communication, such as newspapers, magazines, radio and television. A medium is a vehicle for carrying the sales message of an advertiser to the prospects. It is indeed a vehicle by which advertisers convey their messages to a large group of prospects and thereby aid in closing the gap between producer at the one end and the consumer at the other end. Of course, this is from the viewpoint of advertisers and the audiences. There is another way of looking at the media, and that is from the point of view of the medium itself. Different media are organizations or enterprises for entertainment. They sell the product in the form of newspaper, magazine and radio and television programmes. At best, they are service organizations fulfilling the needs of listeners, readers and viewers for entertainment and information. Each medium designs its product to be more and more attractive among its audience. Each medium applies marketing concepts to the designing of the right product, selling it at the right price, distributing it through several outlets and, at times, taking the help of the right promotional means to increase its circulation or improve the popularity of its programmes. Newspapers publish, be it local news,

national news, special interest information such as business, sports, housekeeping, science, etc. Similarly, television and radio stations broadcast programmes that are designed to attract larger segments of the public. In short, media too have to market their products properly.

Once a medium has been well established and has built up a significant readership or audience, it is in a stronger position to attract advertisers who are on the look out for such media to reach audiences with their selling messages. Of course, they are willing to pay for this service. Thus, in addition to selling their products in the form of newspaper, magazine, radio and television programmes, the media are selling space or time which, in turn, earns large revenues for them. The money so earned out of selling advertising space or time which, in turn, earns large revenues for them. The money so earned out of selling advertising space and time ultimately helps to make the product itself (medium) cheaper and more attractive among its audience.

It would not be inappropriate to mention here that it is advertising that has been instrumental in the phenomenal growth of the media. In the nineteenth century, publishers of newspapers and magazines were faced with the stagnant circulation of their publications, with the result that profits were limited. This was due to the fact that the entire cost of writing and production was covered by subscriptions and newsstand revenue only. If the circulation was to be increased, it was possible only when prices were reduced. With lower prices, the circulation went up, resulting in a widespread reach of advertisers for their selling messages that, in turn, earned more money for the media. Both the media and the advertisers seem to have been benefited in the process. The publishers increased their audiences, profit and sphere of influence; at the same time, advertisers could reach effectively their prospective customers, making mass marketing possible for them. Today, every medium, be it a newspaper or a magazine, the radio or television, has a department with the responsibility of selling advertising space and time. The media themselves do advertise and promote the sale of their advertising space and time, for this is one of the important activities of the media. For their growth and even for their survival, the media have to be constantly on their toes to achieve increasingly higher advertising revenue.

### **Types of Media**

The media are classified into two categories:

**Above-the-line Media:** Press, TV, outdoor, posters, cinema and radio. The recognized agencies get 'commission' from these media.

**Below-the-line Media:** Those who do not give commission to the ad agency. The agency adds a percentage as a handling or profit charge or charges a service fee. The examples are: Direct mail, pas, SP, merchandising, exhibitions and sales literature.

The following are the various categories of media available to a media buyer or an advertiser:

### 1. **Print Media**

(i) *Newspapers:*

(a) *Daily*

(b) *Weekly*

(c) *Sunday*

(d) *Weekend Supplement.*

(ii) **Magazines:**

(a) *Consumer Magazines:* General interest, special interest magazines like Auto World, Interior

India

(b) *Business Publications:* Industrial publications, trade publications, institutional publications, etc.

(iii) *Direct Advertising:* Direct mail.

### II. **Broadcast Media**

(i) *Radio:* Vividh Bharati, FM.

(ii) *Television:* Terrestrial channels like DD and satellite channels like Star, Zee TV.

(iii) *Narrow-cast Media:* Video and Cable TV, Cinema, Ad Films.

### III. **Outdoor Media**

### IV. **Transit Advertising Media**

### V. **Other Media**

(a) *Specialty Media:* T-shirts, buttons, caps, stickers, badges etc.

(b) *Direct Advertising or Direct Marketing (DM).*

(c) *Internet: Media of the new millennium.*

Print media can be considered the first revolution. Electronic media like radio and TV are the second revolution. Digital media like Internet are the third and the most spectacular revolution. Digital media draws on the features of both print and electronic media. The entire complexion of mass media has changed due to what is known as interactivity. The individuals in it multiply the segmented target audiences. The whole mass can be considered to be one in a different perspective. The economics and demographics of media traditionally practiced become a matter of the past. Most renowned publishers have put their publication on Internet.

Internet advertising affects not only product marketing, but also its manufacturing and distribution. A product can be ordered on Internet. The data becomes the input to the production system. The goods are sent directly to customers. Software is available to enable a reader to select the editorial matter of the newspaper available on Internet. It gives the freedom of choice to the customer.

In digital media, we may come across 'pay per view' phenomenon e.g. DTH: direct-to-home TV. Even in the absence of advertising, digital media may be available at a reasonable cost.

### **Media Selection**

As an electrical current flows from one end to the other through a conductor, so the advertising message is transmitted through the advertising media from the advertiser to the target audience. Advertising media are thus the vehicles that carry the advertising messages. Various kinds of media are available to an advertiser. Which one of these should be selected for a particular advertising is a strategic decision.

Effective advertising refers to informing the public about the right product at the right time through the right medium. Conveying a right message through a wrong medium at the wrong time would be a definite waste of resources. Therefore, the right media selection is the crux of the success of the entire advertising campaign. However, the right message, the right timing and the right place of advertising are equally important. Media selection decision refers only to the selection of a specific medium of advertising, such as the newspaper, a magazine, the radio, or television, the mail service or outdoor advertising, whereas *media planning* is a general term encompassing decisions involving the time and place of advertising in addition to the selection of the medium. A media plan outlines how advertising time and space in various media will be

used to achieve the marketing objectives of the company through advertising.

The importance of advertising and its role as a powerful marketing tool need no further repetition, for this has been dealt with at great length in the introductory chapters. Promotion is one of the 4 Ps forming the marketing mix, and advertising is an important part of it. An advertising plan is based on an overall promotional strategy; and media planning follows the advertising plan. *Media strategy* is thus a part of the marketing strategy. In other words, the media plan is part of the overall market plan, and media selection is the last stage in the process of promotion through advertising. Media decisions are mainly concerned with the following:

What are those available media that will serve our advertising needs best? Examples: Newspaper, magazine, radio, television, direct mailing, outdoor, etc. Which individual medium in each general category of media selected above will be the best vehicle for our advertising? Examples: TOI, India Today, Mumbai-Pune-Nagpur radio and Mumbai TV commercials.

**What could be the best combination or mix of media for our total advertising?**

**What would be the best specific schedule for the release of our ads in each of these media?**

**Media planning and media selection** assume significance in the light of frequent reports that advertising is wasteful. One advertiser confessed: "Half of my advertising is wasted. The problem is, I don't know which half." Following the correct methodology and using quantitative models in media planning can achieve elimination of wasteful advertising achieved to a good extent. This is particularly true because, in the entire advertising cost, media charges are fairly substantial. The effectiveness of a well-designed advertising message depends upon "when" and "where" it is released. These are "time" and "place" decisions. In short, we may say that the success of advertising depends upon the right selection of media, the timely release of the advertisement message, its frequency and continuity, and the place of its release. All this signifies media planning.

For the right media planning and selection, the advertiser must know the consumer profile accurately and the market to be reached, i.e., the target market. If you direct advertising to people who have neither the inclination nor the money to buy your product, you are wasting your effort which otherwise may be a good advertisement effort in itself. In this case, the

advertisement is effective, while advertising is ineffective. Therefore, in order to get the most out of the rupees spent on advertising, it should be directed to the right audience. For each target, there is an effective message; and it is this effective message reaching the right audience that makes advertising most successful.

### **Media Planning: New Perspective**

In India, we are experiencing an economic slow down. Consumer buying is on the decline. Ad spends are curtailed Agencies are becoming learner. Clients are becoming more discerning about media usage. Though they are cutting and budgets, they want more effectiveness. In common parlance, this is called 'more bang for the buck.' Clients have become extremely vigilant on how agencies spend their money on media. Intuitive media decisions and exploratory tactics are out. Everything has to be substantiated. It is necessary to stretch every media rupee more and more. Though the broader media mix is planned annually, media planners are continuously shuffling the actual vehicles they choose channels or programmes in case of TV and publications in case of print. Clients want to know how involved their target audience is with a particular programming. Even though demographics cover the reach objectives, the target audience may be a passive viewer. Research on the involvement of the target groups is getting more attention. Agencies are making use of proprietary consumer involvement tools that help them measure media preferences of target audiences.

There is a shift from planning based merely on reach to planning based on awareness/involvement. The client wants to know whether his target audience has actually seen the campaign. He wants to know whether the client was at home when the commercial was telecast. Media planning goes beyond media buying. It has to focus more sharply on consumer decision-making process and the importance of media in that process. Media has to make accountable. Media planners have started using more efficient media evaluation matrices. Audience involvement scores are now weighted while arriving at ROI on media spends.

Media planning has become tactical psychographic, consumer and brand strategy-led and accountable.

### **Media Plan**

1. The first step in media planning is the **collection of useful information about the people or the market to be reached through advertising**. The more detailed and specific the target market data available on geography, age group, sex, income, attitudes, interests, etc., the more appropriate the media selection would be. However, it is well understood that the available advertising budget is an important guide to the media selection. The task is to select a medium most suited to the target market at a given budget cost. This concept of "what-can-you-afford?" in media planning is equally relevant to small as well as large companies, for they do have something like a budget or an appropriation of fund for promotion. Irrespective of the size of the company, it finally settles for how much money it can afford to put in for a particular market for advertising and/ or for promotion.

2. The second significant step in media planning is to **decide upon the nature of the message to be conveyed to the target market**. However, this decision necessarily follows a thorough understanding of the consumer profile. The message or the copy, by which name it is more accurately called, is decided in the light of the aspect of consumer behavior or motivation which is intended to be influenced.

3. Having gathered this significant information, the next logical step is to **search for an ideal match of the audience characteristics of media with the target market profile and, at the same time, check for the perfect adaptability of the message (copy) requirement with the media**. Following the media planning decision process, we have to take into account the other media concepts explained in the following paragraphs.

4. **Reach** is expressed in terms of the number of households or individuals reached by a given medium over a period of time. This is usually expressed in terms of percent of total households or individuals in the target market. Sometimes, there is a possibility of duplication, *i.e.*, two media may reach the target audience. National magazines have a different reach from that of the regional' ones or other media, such as TV, radio, etc. National readership surveys provide information about published materials, whereas several other conducted studies may provide the reach percent of other media. One can buy reach with print in a specific geographical market by taking a combination of newspapers or magazines.

**Frequency** refers to the average number of times different households or individuals are reached by a medium in a given period of time. The frequency of advertisement exposure of the target market depends upon the amount of reinforcement of the image required or the amount of reminding required having sustaining patronage from the target customers. The greater the frequency, the greater the probability of the advertisement message making a deep and lasting impression.

To understand these concepts dearly consider the following illustration. A sample of viewers represents 10 TV Households (HHs) - Q to Z who watch a programme A over a four week period.

HHs											
Weeks	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	
											<b>Total Exposures</b>
1	A	A	A	-	-	-	A	A	-	A	6
2	A	-	A	-	-	A	A	-	-	-	4
3	A	A	A	A	-	A	A	-	-	-	6
4	-	A	A	-	-	A	A	-	-	-	4
<b>Total Exposures</b>	3	3	4	1	0	3	4	1	0	1	20

It is obvious from the above table that from 10 households 8 watch programme A only. Two households U and Y did not watch the programme at all. It gives a reach of 80% to the programme A. Two households Sand Ware exposed to programme 4 times a week, three households (Q, R, V) are exposed to 3 times a week, and one household (T) is exposed to one time a week. Therefore, the average frequency is:

**Total exposures** =  $20 / 8 = 2.5$

## **Reach**

**Continuity** refers to message deliveries over a period of time or a season. It refers to the of the media insertions. Advertisements are inserted at the time frequency round the year. This continuity. Shifting from one medium to another involves the sacrifice of continuity, but may be worthwhile for some other advantages that may flow from it.

**Gross Rating Points** (GRP's) refers to the total weight of a media effort. Quantitatively, it is equal to reach multiplied by average frequency. To illustrate, if 80% homes watch *Chitrahara*, and are exposed on an average 2.5 times within a four-week period, the total GRP's are 200. If the target is 100 GRPs, it can be achieved by buying 10 spots in a programme with TRPs 10 (10X10) or 20 spots in TRP 5-rated programme (20 X 5). There could be umpteen numbers of such combinations.

The size of the message measures the strength and effectiveness of impression. Size is expressed in terms of the space used in print media or the time occupied in the broadcast media.

The above terms are interrelated and inter-dependant, and a different mix of these elements would yield different patterns of message delivery. Media planning, particularly under a given budget, must take into consideration the elements of *reach, frequency, continuity and size*. Unfortunately, there is no single combination of these elements that is ideally suited to all kinds of advertising. Each time the advertiser has to make the most suitable pattern to get the most out of the advertising rupees he spends. However, the advertising budget would continue to be a limiting factor in the final adoption of a specific pattern. The reverse relationship is equally important - that unless the message is sufficiently large - and delivered in sufficient numbers with sufficient regularity, the advertising rupees would be largely wasted. The job of a media planner is to effect a balance between the two approaches.

This process, as you will appreciate now, answers the questions:

- \* **When (the timing of the release)**
- \* **Which (the media selection)**
- \* **How (the coordination in media planning)**
- \* **How much (the budgetary allocation)**

In short, this process designs a course of action that shows how advertising time and space will

be used so as to contribute to the achievement of marketing objectives. Media plan is the end product of media planning process.

The media objectives are set keeping in mind the background of the market, the firm's marketing strategy and its creative strategy. Media objectives thus contribute to the overall attainment of marketing objectives.

**Media objectives** lead us to a definite media strategy to translate media goals into general guidelines involving planner's selection and use of media. The best alternatives are selected.

The details of the media plan are then filled up such as selecting the **broad media classes, selection of media within these classes, and the actual media use decisions for each medium selected.**

The degree of synergy between message content and media provides the missing piece of the jigsaw that media selection often is. For substantive messages, TV may not be a right medium.

### **Designing a Media Plan**

After having explained some of these media concepts, we shall now discuss some strategic considerations in designing a media plan.

The first and foremost is the consideration of the market and the target consumers. We have said earlier that the advertiser must have a full understanding of the target market. Such information is available from consumer research studies. For an appropriate media plan, it is essential to know the type or class of consumers - whether all types are women, children, and old people. They may be professional people, businessmen, farmers, working class people, etc. Newspapers, magazines, radio, television and other media, each has a different coverage. National dailies have different readership from the local or regional readers. This is equally true of magazines. There are sports magazines, each having and film magazines, as well as business its own following. Similarly, the radio and television have their own audience. Different radio and television channels as well as programmes have a different following.

The type of the products and services to be advertised also determines the media to be selected. Industrial products and new products of a technical nature are advertised through

the "Purchase" magazine. Products for exports are advertised in "Products from India" or in the "Product Finder," Fashion-wear is advertised in film, general or fashion magazines, such as *Filmfare*, *India Today* and *Society*, respectively.

After the characteristics of the product come the characteristics of the distribution channel.

Distribution outlets may be classified into national, regional and local. When advertising is done on a national basis, using adequate national media, the product should be made available nationally.

When distribution is restricted to the regional level, advertising on the national basis would be mostly wasteful. In short, advertising would be of little or no value in getting the people to buy products unless these products are made available in an area that is within their easy reach.

Even when the product is nationally distributed, there are pockets or areas in which the company wants to operate more intensely. In such territories or regions, advertising may be more effective if done through regional magazines or dailies, which have greater followership than the national ones. Similar may be the case with the broadcasting media. In India, this is significantly true, for we have many regional languages.

When products are sold through a network of dealers and distributors who are few in number, though influential, advertising to such few target customers may be more effectively done through direct mail or trade journals. In short, the characteristics of distribution determine media selection.

Next to the above strategic considerations comes the **copy formulation** and its method of presenting the message, because only an appropriate media can give a proper expression to the advertisement message and create a lasting impression on the minds of consumers. Newspapers may carry advertisements only in black and white, whereas magazines may express the copy in color. The magic of color in effectively attracting attention to ad messages is well known. It has been found that orange, red and blue stand high on the attention-getting list of colors. Men prefer orange, while women like red. These preferences for colors are useful and significant. In fact, color is an important means of creating an emotional feeling around an advertisement and around the product advertised. Similarly, some photographs and actions in advertisements are more effective if expressed in color. Some advertisements need only to be announced on the radio. There is no need for visual,

photo or action behavior.

New products, when introduced, should be supported with advertising in media that can give exposure of the product to the audience as sensational news with some degree of urgency. National or regional dailies, radio and television are appropriate, but not the fortnightly or monthly magazines.

The consumers of this segment like advertisements for a product, with the objectives of carving a segment of market for it and creating a strong brand loyalty by a conscious attempt at giving the product a personality. This necessitates the designing of advertisements highlighting the various personality attributes and traits of the target user or the group. The copy design of the advertisement message and the media through which the advertisement is released should have a similar personality if advertising is to be very effective.

Some advertisements appear in several magazines of diverse interests. This is true of consumer goods and consumer durable goods. In fact, this is not a very wise thing to do. Each magazine has its distinct class of readers, with a distinct social, cultural, and educational background. We have certain habits, attitudes and stereotypes about events and things around us. The common advertisement message may be effective with one set of readers but may not go down well with another group. Therefore, the right way is to design an advertisement message in the language best understood by the reader of each magazine. When there are no discernible differences among the readers, we may project a common advertisement message.

Pictures in ads exert a powerful influence on the target audience. They speak a universal language. A picture is worth ten thousand words - so goes an old Chinese proverb. An ad with pictures requires no special training in understanding. Pictures in color in the print media are great attention-getters; but when pictures move and talk, it is almost impossible not to pay attention to them. That is why television ads are very powerful and effective. But the question that arises is: At what extra cost? In the first place, pictures with color cost more; but when color pictures are made to move and talk, an advertisement costs very much more. However, the gain in terms of extra audience attention should justify the extra cost incurred.

Similar is the magic of words in creating and holding interest. One author has correctly said: **'Words are the window through which we see images.'** Just by naming a place, a person or an object, we often generate a rush of pleasant thoughts. Some words or expressions pack a greater emotional kick than others. Their use in ad messages makes for greater emotional stimulus and arousal of imagery.

Let us recapitulate the media planning here with an example.

In marketing communication, media, which carries the message, plays a very important role in the whole process as Media is consumed in varied fashion by an entire spectrum of populace and hence choosing the right Media is of prime importance in order for the communication to reach the target population.

Politically speaking Media is often referred as the fourth estate - parliament, executive, judiciary and the media. In today's globalised economy Media exists primarily to deliver entertainment, information, and advertising to a vast audience. In an open and liberal economy Media and Advertising are inextricably linked. Advertisements have become one of the most important cultural factors in our lives and it will be prudent to say that Advertising is the force, which actually sustains all commercial media. This brings us to the process of Media Planning to effectively spend the advertising money.

**The starting point for a media plan must be the marketing situation.** This analysis is done to get a bird's eye view of the market in which the brand is operating and its relative position viz. a viz. its competitors. Advertising is used to communicate certain information to the prospects in order to attain the marketing objectives. Media are the means, which carry this communication to the target audience. This is followed by defining the Advertising Objectives, they are defines to avoid the possibility that different criteria are used by everyone involved right from Managing Director to the executive in the creative department of the agency. For example, the advertising objective could be driving saliency, increasing awareness, reinforcement of existing perceptions, improving the brand image, changing perceptions,

inducing certain behavior and trials.

There is one more dimension to copy strategy. The **copy of an advertisement depends upon the type of media**. When the same product is advertised on the radio, the message is put in such a way that it goes down effectively with the listeners. Sometimes messages are presented in a lyrical form, which is pleasant to the ears; but when the same product is advertised in, say, a magazine, the copy of the advertisement is read by the audience; and it should, therefore, be an eye-catcher. While reading an advertisement, we have more time to think and analyze it objectively. When the same product is advertised on TV, the audience has the opportunity of viewing it in addition to listening to it. The copy in such a case has to be different from the copy in the other two media. Therefore, in our opinion, it is equally necessary that a correct copy strategy be employed which is suitable to the media used for an advertisement.

### **Media Cost and Media Ability**

To get the most out of the advertising rupees spent, the primary concern of the advertiser is media selection. The cost of buying space or time is weighed against the number of audience secured by such advertising. In fact, buying advertising space or time is nothing different from buying commodities. Usually, the question is asked: "**How wide an audience do I get for every rupee I spend?**" The media cost should be commensurate with the measure of the media's ability to carry the message to the target audience. Media ability covers such qualitative values as audience characteristics, editorial personality, and contribution to advertising effectiveness; above all it refers to a "media image" capable of enhancing the perception and communication value of a message. For example, Channel A and Channel B deliver the same message and the same extension of advertising exposure to the same audience; but if, say, Channel A has a better reputation, honesty and good editorials, the advertisement in this may receive a higher perception and communication among its audience than if it is inserted in Channel B.

The selectivity offered by some media is useful for advertisers, for it enables them to reach & target market with minimum waste. In fact, the media themselves provides a great deal of information on the media about demographic characteristics. The objective of any media pi is

to achieve the best possible matching of media and the market.

The media ability is measured under the following heads: I

(i) **Distribution Measurement:** Expressed in the number of copies circulated.

(ii) **Audience Measurement:** Expressed in terms of audience size, audience composition and the amount of audience exposure.

(iii) **Exposure Measurement:** The advertiser looks for the ability of the media to create advertising exposure. Once the media have produced the desired exposure, the quality of the message will determine the subsequent impact in terms of perception, communication and behavioral response.

**Magazines** have different images in the eyes of readers, such as thorough coverage of subject matter; impartial and accurate reporting; stimulating reading; modern and up-to-date; good style of writing, personalized, etc.

The standard method of expressing advertising cost in **newspapers** is rupees per line of standard dimensions. Also, rupees per square inch or square centimeter is the cost of space buying in newspaper' and magazines. A newspaper having a larger circulation will naturally charge a higher cost per line or per unit space. Local or regional newspapers have lower circulation and therefore, a comparatively lower rate than the national dailies. For the purpose of effective comparison, both the costs of buying space are to be reduced to the common denominator of line or unit space per unit of circulation. Some authors' have formulated a milline rate unit. This is useful in the comparison of newspaper advertising rates. The milline rate is defined as:

$$\text{Milline rate} = \frac{1,000,000 \times \text{Rate per agate line}}{\text{Circulation}}$$

A newspaper with an agate line rate of Rs. 25/- and having a circulation of 100,000 would be cheaper than a newspaper with a line rate of Rs. 15/- and a circulation of 20,000. In the first newspaper, the milline rate will be Rs. 250/- whereas, in the latter newspaper, it would be Rs.

750/-. The milline rate is the cost expressed in rupees per line per one million circulations.

Similar is the method of **comparing the costs of buying space in magazines**. The cost per thousand is the unit used, which measures the cost of reaching one thousand audience. In the case of television and radio, the rates are expressed in units of time, *i.e.*, so many rupees per 10 seconds spot (film or slide) or per 20-second spot, etc. Again, the number of listeners or viewers varies from one programme to another, or from one radio station to another. Therefore, the more appropriate unit is the cost per commercial minute per thousand viewers or listeners.

The **cost aspect of the media and their ability to reach the audience and achieve the exposure** has been worked out in the following example. For the sake of simplicity, only two magazines at a time are considered for the purpose of comparison. Table 1 gives information on the comparative efficiency of circulation and audience for two magazines, A and B.

<b>Comparison Basis</b>	<b>Magazine "A"</b>	<b>Magazine "B"</b>
Cost of 2-page colour ad (central spread)	Rs.15, 000/	Rs.25, 000/
Circulation (No. of copies)	50,000	100,000
Circulation efficiency (cost per 1,000 copies)	Rs.300	Rs.250/
Readers (Nos. per copy)	4/5	3
Issue audience (No. of readers)	225,000	300,000
Audience Efficiency	66/66	83/33

Magazine A, though having a higher cost of circulation, shows a better audience efficiency.

Similarly, the exposure efficiency may be compared for any number of magazines. In Table 2 comparison of the exposure efficiency of two magazines A and D have been shown.

<b><u>Comparison Basis</u></b>	<b>Magazine "A"</b>	<b>Magazine "D"</b>