

The five biggest advances in media and marketing today

 By [Ross Sergeant](#)

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The media world is changing more rapidly than ever before. Keep up!

1. Read all about it... online

Old-world printed newspapers, which we thank and salute for having given rise to the advertising industry we all know and love, are falling out of circulation at an increasing rate. Magazines, once the pride and joy of many an automotive campaign, are following suit. Projections show that within 20 years some markets might have such low print circulations that the two mediums will no longer serve as a mainstream media opportunity, but merely a quaint novelty.

An article posted on Facebook (usually linking to the author's site) is not only hard to define between an 'online newspaper', an 'online magazine', or a blog; but neither its readers nor its advertisers show much interest in the classification anymore.

2. When last have you synched you iPod?

Whilst most 40-somethings have only just figured how to transfer a lifetime's CDs (proudly copied to MP3) to a new iTunes installation, their younger 20-something counterparts struggle to grasp the concept of paying for, or even downloading, individual 'albums': knowing only a world of freely-available music through Youtube or streaming services like Spotify.

3. Fibre is our new umbilical cord

Cord cutters (those who have decided to end their services with satellite or cable providers, only streaming TV through services like Netflix, Hulu, or HBO Now) are increasing and look like they will soon be overtaken by cord-nevers (people who have never had cable or satellite subscriptions).

4. Paradigm shifts in marketing effectiveness

Digital media has introduced terms that are as dramatically new to seasoned marketers as the seismic industry-wide shifts they bring.

Optimisation (the practice of using media measurement to improve efficiency of a campaign), once only possible three to six months after a campaign had ended, is now a constant delivery from the very moment the campaign begins. Whereas that optimisation was originally provided only through analysis by media-buying agencies, the media vendors (particularly from arch rivals Facebook Ads and Google AdWords) are providing this service themselves in a simple aim to improve their efficiencies and thereby steal share from each other.



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Targeting, or ‘implementation-planning’ in old-world media speak, (the practice of specifying which times or spaces within a media type or channel) is, again, being provided by digital media vendors themselves leveraging the crushing data they gather from users every moment their lives. The level of sophistication in the Facebook Ads engine, for example, is so advanced that advertisers can select multiple creative treatments for multiple interest- or psychographic-based markets and allow the engine to serve the creative to the market most interested – without specifying the interests or psychographics. That has motivated media- and advertising-agencies to revise their approach to the placement decision and creative decision respectively.

Goal-setting, and the measurement of whether marketing has achieved those goals, which was previously something we could do only after exhaustive econometric modelling studies (so many of which returned the sad result of ‘insufficient data to make a conclusion’), has taken quantum leaps forward with direct attribution showing measurable metrics, like sales, originating along a digital path from a specific consumer interaction.

5. Who gazes out the window anymore?

And, all the while, a boy from Pretoria Boys’ High is one of many innovators working on a self-driving car, which itself promises to turn another part of the media world on its head. Already we know that people who don’t drive themselves (passengers in cars, taxis, trains and such) are significantly less likely to be gazing at outdoor billboards or listening to the car radio than drivers, but are more likely to be found engaged in their own digital devices.

Take us a few years forward to a world of fully autonomous cars, particularly those without a steering wheel or two sets of facing seats, and the chances for the survival of outdoor billboards and in-car radio diminish completely.

By the time we land on Mars, media and marketing is going to be a terrific space.

ABOUT ROSS SERGEANT

Ross has 17 years' media and marketing experience, having occupied senior client-side media roles in the United Kingdom (Diageo), Ireland (Diageo) and South Africa (FNB and Brandhouse), and agency-side media strategy roles at MediaCom, OMD, and MEC.

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