



# Insights into the New Media Frontier

## Objective:

The Association of Medical Media convened a panel of medical healthcare media experts to explore the present and future needs of the pharmaceutical industry related to multichannel media strategies. We were fortunate to have several key opinion leaders offer their observations and goals during the session.

The Association would like to thank them for their time, expertise and enthusiasm in the endeavor. It will be the first of many.

## Panel Participants:

**Rob Enos**, Media Director,  
Abelson-Taylor

**Johanna Tompetrini**, EVP,  
Professional Media Services, Ogilvy  
CommonHealth Medical Media

**Amy Levinson**, Principal A.L.L.  
Global Solutions, LLC

**Johanna Schlossberg**, Sr. VP,  
Director, SSCG Media Group

**Eugene Lee**, EVP,  
Managing Director, CMI

## Moderators:

**Ned Matalia**, Principal,  
The Matalia Group

**Leslie Laredo**, President,  
The Laredo Group

**Charles Hunt**, President of  
Association of Medical Media

**Lori Raskin**, Director of Research,  
Frontline Medical Communications

**Jim McDonough**, Director of  
Marketing, BulletinHealthcare

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*Media agency thought leaders discuss the implications of a changing landscape.*

### Overview

Given increased audience fragmentation, it's getting harder and harder for companies to connect with their "target docs". Target audience reach is the mantra – with communications becoming a true multi-channel affair. That said, it was agreed that there really are no best practices about how and when to use each channel most effectively nor are there measurement standards across all channels. As Charlie Hunt pointed out in his introduction, *"In this environment, the role of the media salesperson also demands that you be a marketing strategist as well. The landscape has changed quite a bit. You have to bring new strategies to your clients."*

With physicians spending less time with reps, identifying key targets (validated reach) via list matching and connecting with them on their preferred mode of communication is key. *"We're about finding the right qualified reach,"* confirmed Eugene Lee. *"I don't need 99% reach. I'd be happy with a qualified 20% reach and may actually pay you more to get it."* Given that adoption rates of mobile devices (phone and tablet) are at an all-time high, digital platforms are leading the way and "uber engagement" is the priority moving forward. That's not to say that print is dead by any means, although print spend is down considerably in the last couple of years.

### The Media and Marketing Landscape

Although we all know that physicians and other HCPs are harder to access, each one of them likes to be communicated to in slightly different ways. For marketers, that means there is no more "status quo" in terms of message strategies and tactics. In this new digital world, clients crave innovative, consultative ideas and are increasingly demanding them from their media agencies. Johanna Schlossberg said, *"And at the agency level, one of the most useful things a rep can do is to show us a user flow of their digital program – think it through and show us the touch points and where the ads are being displayed. This is good for us, the creatives, and useful with regulatory as well."* In this environment, knowledge is power and the agency is in a good position to both centralize ideas and solutions from all their media partners and, if done right, to earn a "trusted advisor" role. The challenge is that all of this is taking place in an environment where the MLR process has gotten more – not less – restrictive. Again, the agency can play a role to coordinate MLR best practices that can save time and help streamline the process.

Brand planning is starting earlier and the need for flexibility is paramount. Understanding and communicating brand objectives is more important than ever as agencies are working with more specialized media partners to translate these needs to a new media frontier. The communication often starts at the RFP level. According to Rob Enos, this should not be a one-way street. *"It is not the agency or planner sending out the RFP and you just responding. It's knowing details on what the brand is trying to do. It's not a one-way communication. If the RFP isn't clear in this regard, you need to push back a little."*

Complicating the situation is the realization that the old print-based metrics are not always optimal in an increasingly digital world. As mentioned, there are no standards across channels, so the task of agreeing to media objectives, goals and metrics with the Brand teams is also more important than ever.

Media agencies need to push their media partners to raise the bar on “metrics that matter” but at the same time to be open to a client’s preferred metrics. The conversation ranges from the value of reach and frequency in today’s environment to the increased importance of “viewable impressions” and “total time viewed” as true engagement metrics. As Eugene Lee points out, *“I can no longer function in a world with just one measurement that says I’m good or I’m bad. You can’t work in that way anymore.”* SSCG, for example, creates a measurement plan for all their clients to determine what measurements they will look at to evaluate a program.

Lastly, in a world of change, it is agreed that media partners must know their digital assets well, where they specifically add value and how best to measure results. Now more than ever, “We will have to get back to you on that” answers will just not cut it – with media agencies or the Brand!

## **Apps**

Apps were a big part of the discussion – specifically, how best to present them to the agency, what they should contain and how they are measured. The group agreed that apps are a mobile-ready way to help lead the engagement charge. If done correctly, they both extend brand equity and offer up a different (and personalized) experience vis a vis websites or print. But as Amy Levinson suggested, *“I think the publishers have to decide their desired user experience with their targets in mobile because it will be different on a smartphone versus a tablet. An iTunes app for example is a basic PDF that you can’t link and you can’t embed video. It’s not designed to be a true iPad experience.”*

Functionality is key to a great app along with its ability to further engage the user with links to other media such as videos and podcasts. The discussion evolved as to the best way to position apps to the agency and it was agreed that either “Here is what we can do for the brand in this channel” or “Here is how we can drive business change in this channel” was a good way to start. And media partners: Come equipped with your measurement plan!

Furthermore, not only do all clients have different levels of risk aversion, but the media agencies themselves have yet to fully figure out how and when to best integrate it all. Again – knowledge (and experience) is power. Generally speaking, agencies tend to treat new clients more delicately on the risk continuum; conversely, with existing clients and brands, they tend to push the tenets of this new world order more aggressively – especially in areas where they are most knowledgeable and can share best practices.

## Help the Target User and You Help the Brand

The targets/users demand compelling content in multiple formats and channels so they can have what they need – when and how they want it. The use of responsive design for all devices is an absolute necessity to increase likelihood of engagement success and put the brand in the best possible light. More directly, ads must be optimized in order to be seen “seamlessly” on each and every device. Any click to a non-adaptive link will defeat the purpose and potential for longer engagement which of course is the Holy Grail.

The “devil is in the details” is a bromide on which virtually everyone could agree. When proposing new ideas and innovations in the new world order, agencies (and media partners) must endeavor to SHOW and TELL all aspects of a multi-channel campaign. Johanna Tompetrini made the point that *“Amazingly, many people come in selling digital programs and they don’t have digital examples to look at – this brings it to life.”* From a macro perspective this translates to showing clients relevant best practice case studies that highlight the proven value of new programs suggested. Conversely, when discussing the details of the appropriate use of mobile banners, show clients the need for very specific messaging with a call to action that is limited in scope (e.g., visit us in Booth 124).

As an aside, media agency personnel need to be fully aware of the capabilities of their media partners. That can prove challenging, as Leslie Laredo pointed out. *“Sometimes I feel like I’m with people who just got the training wheels off the bike and at other times, I’m riding with Tour de France level people. There is still a huge range out there.”*

Just as importantly, at the individual brand level, the agency and partner need to be able to know where a new tactic best fits the brand objectives and how it integrates with other tactics to optimize engagement and to maximize other relevant performance metrics. What’s probably most important in the digital universe? Engagement! We need to know and prove engagement including time spent and rate of interaction.

In conclusion, all of the participants agreed on a few key points:

- Brand communications need to be seamlessly provided in the channels where targets live.
- Engagement is key. Other metrics must be consistent and relevant to brand objectives.
- Pilot programs are a good way to start. Eventual platform integration is the goal.
- Quality and quantity are both necessary elements of a good media plan.
- And finally, to our media partners: Don’t try to do it all, but whatever it is you do, do it well.