Chapter 11
Media Planning and Buying

❖WEB REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Explain the differences between media planning and media buying.

Media planning is a problem-solving process, devised jointly by the agency's media department, the account and creative teams, and the marketer's brand management group. Once the plan is formed, a media buying unit executes the plan.

2. Explain the power shift going on in the world of media planning.

We've mentioned before the growth of media buying services, such as the media megashop Starcom MediaVest, as separate companies that specialize in media buying, This is a shift in the way the media industry is organized and is referred to as **unbundling media services**. Because these media companies can aggregate the buying function across many different clients, that enables them to negotiate better rates for their clients. Because these companies control the money, they have become a powerful force in the advertising industry leading to a tug-of-war over control of planning. Faced with competition from these independent media companies, many large agencies have set up or bought their own buying services to compete with the independents and go after outside business.

3. Explain the concept of exposure.

Exposure is also known as impressions. In practice, media planners use gross impressions as a primary measure for total impressions.

The rate of exposure is called **frequency**. Although the reach estimate is based on only a single exposure, frequency estimates the number of times the exposure is expected to happen.

4. How are gross impressions and gross rating points calculated?

Gross impressions are the sum of the audiences of all the media vehicles used during a certain span of time. The summary figure is called "gross" because the planner has made no attempt to calculate how many different people were in the audience or whether the same person saw the ad several times. To get the sum of gross impressions, the media planner finds the audience figure for each vehicle used,

multiplies that figure by the number of times the vehicle was used, and adds the vehicle figures.
To avoid the huge numbers, media planners convert impressions to **gross rating points** in order to compare the efficiency of different media schedules. Gross rating points are calculated by multiplying the rating by the number of messages.

5. What are some of the strategic considerations that determine the level of reach?

An important decision regarding reach is how many different members of the target audience can be exposed to the message in a particular time frame. Different, or unduplicated, audiences are those that have at least one chance to be exposed to a message. Most advertisers realize that a campaign's success is due in part to its ability to reach as many of the targeted audience as possible.

6. What strategic considerations affect the level of frequency?

Strategies are designed to deliver on the media objectives—to deliver the right level of exposure in terms of reach and frequency. Some plans may emphasize reach while others emphasize frequency. It's possible to work for a balance of both. The strategic thinking challenge is to come up with ideas about how the objectives will be accomplished. These strategies generally include decisions that focus on the target audience, the media used, the time frame, the duration, and size. Following is a discussion related to these issues.

7. What is effective frequency and why is it important?

Because of the proliferation of information and clutter, many media planners believe there should be a threshold, or minimum frequency level, before they consider an audience segment to have been exposed to the advertising message. This theory essentially combines the reach and the frequency elements into one factor known as **effective frequency**. The idea is that you add frequency to reach until you get to the level where people respond. Some planners call this effective reach because it is making the reach level more effective by increasing frequency.

8. What do BDI and CDI stand for and how are they used in media planning?

A category development index (CDI) is calculated for various categories, which is an index of the relative consumption rate of a product in a particular market. Similarly, a brand development index (BDI) is an index of the consumption rate of a brand in a particular market. The CDI tells you where the category is strong and weak and the BDI tells you where a particular brand is strong and weak. There are different strategies for dealing with these levels and they have implications for the media mix and schedule. Planners typically don't make heavy allocations in weak sales areas unless strong marketing signals indicate significant growth potential.

9. Give two examples of strategies that relate to the media mix decisions.

The selection of media is based on message needs. Depending on whether you wanted to develop reminder advertising or provide information, a different strategy and mix would be used.

10. Explain the concept of media weight and how it is used by planners.

Media planners often used decision criterion called weighting to help them decide how much to budget. Weighting strategies can be designed to show the relative proportion of media activity in terms of any number of factors, such as seasonality, geography, or audience segment.

11. Why is cost efficiency important in media planning and how is it determined?

Sometime advertisers evaluate the media mix in terms of cold, hard cash. The advertiser wants prospects and not just readers, viewers, or listeners, therefore, advertisers should compare the cost of each proposed media vehicle with the specific vehicle's ability to deliver the target audience. The cheapest vehicle may not deliver the highest percent of the target audience, so the selection process is a balancing act.

12. Define CPM and CPP and explain the difference between them.

The process of measuring the target audience size against the cost of that audience is based on calculations of efficiency—or more popularly, **cost per thousand** (**CPM**), which is an estimate of the cost to expose one thousand audience members, and **cost per point** (**CPP**), which is a method of comparing media vehicles by relating the cost of the message to the audience rating.

13. What is the difference between a continuous, flighting, and pulsing schedule?

A continuous schedule spreads the advertising evenly over the campaign. A pulsing strategy means ads run all the time, sometimes more often than not. A flighting continuity strategy means ads alternate between running intensely for a period and then not at all for a period.

14. What are the three areas that a media buyer monitors in order to see that the media buy follows the media plan?

- Program preemptions
- Missed closings
- Technical problems

15. What are the challenges and changes that are likely to affect the way media planning and buying operates?

One challenge media planners face is the lack of reliable audience research on new media. But the problem is deeper than that as the industry continues to challenge the validity of the traditional media monitoring systems, such as the Nielsen ratings.

Some experts are calling for innovative media monitoring systems that measure outcomes and results instead of simply delivery.

Another problem is that media research is based on each medium as a separate study for separate media. Most of the research services are unable to tell you much about the effectiveness of combined media, such as seeing the same message on television and then reading about it in a newspaper story or ad.